

# THE CRITERION

1922-1939

# THE CRITERION

1922-1939

जौषपुर विश्वविद्यालय ग्रन्थालय  
*in eighteen volumes*

*edited by*

T. S. ELIOT

१९२६-१९३९

Vol. IV

*January 1926 - October 1926*

FABER AND FABER

24 Russell Square

London



*First published in this Collected Edition, 1967  
by Faber and Faber Limited  
24 Russell Square London WC1  
Reproduced from the original numbers  
Volumes I-III published by Cobden Sanderson Limited,  
1922-1925  
Volumes IV-VIII (up to Number 32) by Faber and  
Gwyer Limited, 1926-1929  
and Volumes VIII (from Number 33)-XVIII by  
Faber and Faber Limited, 1929-1939  
Printed in Great Britain  
by Latimer Trend & Co Ltd Whitstable  
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Sl. by H.A.

## PREFACE

*The Criterion*, which I edited throughout the whole of the seventeen years during which it appeared, was founded by (Lilian) Lady Rothermere at the end of 1921: in the first number appeared *The Waste Land*. At that time I was on the staff of Lloyds Bank, a position which precluded my accepting any salary: but a small salary was paid to Richard Aldington as assistant editor, and to my faithful secretary Irene Fassett, who accompanied me when I joined the staff of Faber & Gwyer. For a time *The Criterion* appeared under the joint auspices of Lady Rothermere and that firm, which became Faber & Faber. It continued to be published by Faber & Faber until 1939, when war became imminent: the prospect for a quarterly of very limited appeal was so unpromising, that we decided to bring the magazine to an end.

When starting *The Criterion*, I wished to include representatives of both older and younger generations, and opened with a contribution from that genial *doyen* of English letters, George Saintsbury. G. K. Chesterton was also a generous contributor. I am proud to have introduced to English readers the work of Marcel Proust. I am proud of having published work by D. H. Lawrence, and by Wyndham Lewis, James Joyce and Ezra Pound. I am proud of having published the work of some of the younger English poets, such as Auden, Spender and MacNeice. Throughout I had always two aims in view: to present to English readers, by essays and short stories, the work of important new foreign writers, and to offer longer and more deliberate reviews than was possible in magazines of more frequent appearance. I think that both of my aims were realised, and that the seventeen volumes of *The Criterion* constitute a valuable record of the thought of that period between two wars.

T. S. ELIOT

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# THE NEW CRITERION

## A QUARTERLY REVIEW

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VOL. IV., No. I.

JANUARY, 1926

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## THE IDEA OF A LITERARY REVIEW

By T. S. ELIOT

THE existence of a literary review requires more than a word of justification. It is not enough to present a list of distinguished contributors; it is not enough to express a cordial zeal for the diffusion of good literature; it is not enough to define a 'policy'. The essential preliminary is to define the task to be attempted, and the place which may be occupied, by any literary review; to define the nature and the function. Many reviews and periodicals qualified as "literary" have proved deficient not so much by their failure to carry out their purposes as by their failure to conceive these purposes and possibilities clearly. This note, therefore, will be concerned less with the point of view of *The New Criterion*, compared with that of other reviews, than with the definition of the literary review in general, and the precise application of the term 'literature' in such a periodical.

There are two pairs of opposed errors, into which a 'literary review' may fall. It may err by being too

comprehensive in its selection of contributors, or by being too narrow. Or it may err by including too much material and representing too many interests, which are not strictly literary, or on the other hand by sticking too closely to a narrow conception of literature. It is obvious that most literary periodicals follow one of these four deviations, which I shall call for convenience 1 (a) and (b), and 2 (a) and (b); and that it is possible for a periodical to exhibit one error out of each pair.

1 (a). The review which makes up its contents merely of what the editor considers 'good stuff' will obviously have the character of a miscellany, and no other character whatever, except the feeble reflection of the character of a feeble editor. To miscellanies which acknowledge their nature I raise no objection; there is a place for such publications, but they are not reviews. A review which depends merely on its editor's vague perceptions of 'good' and 'bad' has manifestly no critical value. A review should be an organ of documentation. That is to say, the bound volumes of a decade should represent the development of the keenest sensibility and the clearest thought of ten years. Even a single number should attempt to illustrate, within its limits, the time and the tendencies of the time. It should have a value over and above the aggregate value of the individual contributions. Its contents should exhibit heterogeneity which the intelligent reader can resolve into order. The apparent heterogeneity of the present number of *The New Criterion* is, therefore, not without a plan—at least an intention.

1 (b). The miscellaneous review is negative: the review which propagates the ideas of a single man, or the views and fancies of a small group, is more evidently obnoxious. In the realm of action, of political or theological controversy, a small and compact body of troops, or even a single leader, may accomplish useful work. But in the world of ideas, no individual, no small group, is ever good enough

or wise enough to deserve such licence. Of messianic literature we have sufficient.

From what has been said it should appear that the ideal literary review will depend upon a nice adjustment between editor, collaborators and occasional contributors. Such an adjustment must issue in a 'tendency' rather than a 'programme'. A programme is a fragile thing, the more dogmatic the more fragile. An editor or a collaborator may change his mind; internal discord breaks out; and there is an end to the programme or to the group. But a tendency will endure, unless editor and collaborators change not only their minds but their personalities. Editor and collaborators may freely express their individual opinions and ideas, so long as there is a residue of common tendency, in the light of which many occasional contributors, otherwise irrelevant or even antagonistic, may take their place and counteract any narrow sectarianism.

2 (a) and (b). The solution of the second dilemma—that of being either too general or too strictly 'literary'—involves a working notion of the term 'literature'. Too wide an inclusion of subject matter is a fault similar to that of indiscriminate inclusion of contributors and needs no further elucidation. The vice of making a review too narrowly literary is not so evident. On the contrary, many readers have criticised *The Criterion* for not being literary enough. But I have seen the birth and death of several purely literary periodicals; and I say of all of them that in isolating the concept of literature they destroy the life of literature. It is not merely that there is not enough good literature, even good second-rate literature, to fill the pages of *any* review; or that in a purely literary review the work of a man of genius may appear almost side by side with some miserable counterfeit of his own style. The profounder objection is the impossibility of defining the frontiers, or limiting the context of 'literature'.

Even the purest literature is alimented from non-literary sources, and has non-literary consequences. Pure literature is a chimera of sensation; admit the vestige of an idea and it is already transformed.

We must then take the vague but quite adequate concept of literature as the beautiful expression of particular sensation and perception, general emotion and impersonal ideas, merely as the centre from which we move; and form a literary review, not merely on literature, but on what we may suppose to be the interests of any intelligent person with literary taste. We will not include irrelevant information, subjects of technical and limited interest, or subjects of current political and economic controversy. We must include besides 'creative' work and literary criticism, any material which should be operative on general ideas—the results of contemporary work in history, archæology, anthropology, even of the more technical sciences when those results are of such a nature to be valuable to the man of general culture and when they can be made intelligible to him. In such a structure we must include—the statement ought to be superfluous—the work of continental writers of the same order of merit as our own; and especially the writers who ought to be known in England, rather than those whose work is already accepted here. And here again, as in the choice of authors, our catholicity must be ordered and rational, not heterogene and miscellaneous. Above all the literary review—which might be called a review of general ideas, except that such a designation emphasises the intellectual at the expense of the sensational and emotional elements—must protect its disinterestedness, must avoid the temptation ever to appeal to any social, political or theological prejudices.

Such, then, are the principles which I hold to be valid for any literary review; many other reviews than *The New Criterion* might be formed on these principles. As for

*The New Criterion* itself, I have expressed my aversion to stating any programme or erecting any platform. But it might not be amiss to clarify by illustration the notion of a 'tendency'. Here the reader must take warning. Even in indicating a tendency—far from formulating a programme—I must perforce falsify. I cannot help substituting personal tendencies for those which are impersonal and existing in the outside world. But from this dilemma there is no escape, and the reader must make his own reserves and deductions accordingly. I believe that the modern tendency is toward something which, for want of a better name, we may call classicism. I use the term with hesitation, for it is hardly more than analogical: we must scrupulously guard ourselves against measuring living art and mind by dead laws of order. Art reflects the transitory as well as the permanent condition of the soul; we cannot wholly measure the present by what the past has been, or by what we think the future ought to be. Yet there is a tendency—discernable even in art—toward a higher and clearer conception of Reason, and a more severe and serene control of the emotions by Reason. If this approaches or even suggests the Greek ideal, so much the better: but it must inevitably be very different. I will mention a few books, not all very recent, which to my mind exemplify this tendency:

*Réflexions sur la violence*, by Georges Sorel; *L'Avenir de l'intelligence*, by Charles Maurras; *Belpégor*, by Julien Benda; *Speculations*, by T. E. Hulme; *Réflexions sur l'intelligence*, by Jacques Maritain; *Democracy and Leadership*, by Irving Babbitt. Anyone who is acquainted with two or more of these books will understand my use of the word 'tendency', for the theories and points of view are extremely divergent. And against this group of books I will set another group of books, more accidental, it is true, but all recently received, which represent to my mind that part of the present which is already dead:

*Christina Alberta's Father*, by H. G. Wells; *St. Joan*\*, by Bernard Shaw; and *What I Believe*†, by Bertrand Russell. (I am sorry to include the name of Mr. Russell, whose intellect would have reached the first rank even in the thirteenth century, but when he trespasses outside of mathematical philosophy his excursions are often descents.) Between these writers there are many and great differences, as between the others. And they all have their moments: at one point in his novel Mr. Wells lapses from vulgarity into high seriousness; at two points, if not more, in his long series of plays Mr. Shaw reveals himself as the artist whose development was checked at puberty. But they all hold curious amateur religions† based apparently upon amateur or second-hand biology, and on *The Way of all Flesh*. They all exhibit intelligence at the mercy of emotion. They all, it is true, have their faith. It is not for us to sneer at the faith of those who were born and reared under conditions different from ours—perhaps more difficult—perhaps easier. But we must find our own faith, and having found it, fight for it against all others. And with this I will make no more ado of tendencies.

\* Two new books about Mr. Shaw, *Table Talk of G.B.S.*, by Archibald Henderson (Chapman & Hall, 5/- net.), and *Shaw*, by J. S. Collis (Cape, 5/- net), should have been reviewed, but for lack of space. They are of no great value, but show that *l'on porte partout le cadavre de son grand-père*.

† This admirable pamphlet, the most interesting so far of a pert little series (Kegan Paul), is a complete credo of die-hard radicalism. It deserves very full attention, but, as with other dogmatic revelations, an adequate commentary would much exceed in length the document commented upon.

† Very different from the religion of Mr. Middleton Murry, which I am totally unable to understand.



# ARISTOTLE ON DEMOCRACY AND SOCIALISM

By H. G. DALWAY TURNBULL

i.

IT has been well remarked by Sir Frederick Pollock that just as a Brahman, when he starts to write a book, invokes Ganesh, the elephant-headed Deity of Wisdom, so any Western, essaying to treat of politics, might well begin with an invocation of the name of Aristotle.

On almost all subjects connected with man and his problems Aristotle is the first and the greatest master. He possessed—as no other thinker has possessed in an equal degree—a combination of the philosophic and the scientific mind. He ‘saw life steadily, and saw it whole’; his calm and piercing gaze enabled him to penetrate to the heart of a problem, to analyse its component elements, and, with the nearest human approach to infallibility, to select and stress its most important factors.

Of rhetoric, of passion—other than the passion for facts and laws in facts—of any merely literary striving after style, his works, as they have come down to us, are quite destitute. As Cardinal Newman remarked, he writes like Nature talking of her own works. In the serenity with which he strides over whole continents of thought, and maps out once for all their chief landmarks, he reminds us of the great material conqueror, with his almost godlike calm, narrating so simply and so clearly his campaigns in Gaul. But there is no touch of ‘veni, vidi, vici’ about Aristotle. His gaze is so intensely rivetted on the facts, his mind so absorbed in their analysis and explanation, that,

as has been well said, he sounds sometimes like a man talking to himself.

In an age of philosophical sciolism and impossible systems, a reinterpretation in modern terms of the greatest of thinkers is one of the needs of the times.

The *Politics* of Aristotle, though it is a treasury of political wisdom, is in some ways an unsatisfactory work. It has come down to us in a form which is certainly not the final form that the Master would have given it. The parts do not combine into a logically connected whole, and cannot be rearranged to do so. We cannot be sure that any given paragraph—still less any given sentence—contains the actual words of Aristotle. And yet we feel that, as Jowett says, the whole bears the 'imprint of the master mind', and that the apparently simple and yet profound aphorisms which light up its pages are the expression of that mind alone.

The *Politics* of Aristotle, says Jowett, 'continue to have a practical relation to our own times'; the objection that Aristotle dealt only or mainly with the city-state is plausible, but superficial. Aristotle dealt with the fundamental qualities and relations of man in society.

To enable us better to understand the way in which he would have looked at modern socialist and communist schemes, let us briefly review some of his leading ideas.

The object of the State, he says, is to enable its citizens not merely to live, but to live well. It should therefore be something more than a mere guarantee for the mutual respect of rights, and should develope the virtue of its citizens (Book III., Chapter 9\*). This is surely a higher ideal than that of Herbert Spencer and the Philosophical Radicals. But Aristotle knew that mere laws and prohibi-

\* The references are to the books as numbered in Bekker's edition of 1878, as followed by Welldon, whose translation is probably the easiest for the general reader. Jowett follows the order of Bekker's first edition.

tions—like those of our Puritans or of America to-day—are comparatively useless to that end. He insists (V., 1) on the importance of education, which should be regulated by the State, to impress on each citizen the peculiar ethos proper to the polity. The immediate success and the ultimate failure with which this aim was pursued by pre-war Germany is a double confirmation of Aristotle's wisdom. The State must mould, but it must mould wisely, and history warns us that militaristic states have ultimately failed (IV., 14).

In his approval of the rule of the superman—of unique virtue and wisdom—Aristotle agreed with Carlyle; but, unlike Carlyle, he regarded such a thing as a purely ideal conception (III., 13), and his best practicable ideal is some form of constitutional democracy. For democracy seems to be the only form of government suitable to large states (III., 15)—a fortiori to our huge modern nation-states. The best constitution is one in which the middle class is predominant, because the middle class is more reasonable, more ready to act constitutionally, and in its nature more permanent than the classes of the very rich or the very poor (VI., 11). From this point of view Aristotle would have held that Victorian England under Palmerston was politically sounder than England under Lloyd George.

If a large number of persons are excluded from all honours or are very poor, the State will have enemies within itself (III., 11). They should therefore have some share in the Government, though in the best state the unfit will be excluded from full political rights (III., 5). Now our modern franchise is the equivalent of the direct participation in government by the Greeks of the old city-states; and it is quite certain that Aristotle would not have approved of universal adult suffrage even under modern conditions. He would regard the franchise less as a right than as a duty to be exercised for the benefit of

the State, and he would insist that some qualification, other than that of age and residence, whether of property, education, or service to the community, would be a desirable safeguard (III., 13). The art of government, said Voltaire, is to make two-thirds of the community support the other third; our modern ideal—economically far more dangerous—seems to be exactly the reverse. Bagehot, Liberal as he was, saw the danger that both political parties would try to outbid each other for the support of the working man. *Vox populi*, if worked in that manner, he said, will be *vox diaboli*; which is what it appears to Dean Inge. Aristotle was well aware of the danger. For the poor to use their majority to confiscate the property of the rich is, he says, as unjust as the plunder of the masses by a tyrant or an oligarchy (III., 10).

A mainly agricultural democracy is more stable, he says, than a mainly industrial one, for large bodies of mechanics are politically restless and meddlesome (VII., 4). Is it necessary to quote the attempts of Trade Union leaders to blackmail the community and dictate to Government by means of Direct Action?

Extreme democracy, in which all citizens have an absolute equality, is suited only to some states, and will not last even in those unless founded on a sound system of laws and morals (VII., 4). To our talk of basing government in countries like India on democratic principles, Aristotle would have replied, with a smile of amused contempt, that the idea was, in the nature of things, impossible, because the necessary character and the necessary unity did not exist.

Book VIII. contains a masterly analysis of the causes and occasions of political disturbances and revolutions. Aristotle's generalisation that the principal condition which gives rise to such 'sedition' is a desire for equality on the part of the many, or of superiority on the part of the few—often, of course, cloaked under democratic

pretexts—has been abundantly verified by history. He adds, with his usual insight, that the desire of gain is often not so much the wish to acquire wealth for itself as the envy that men feel of the larger share possessed—whether justly or unjustly—by others. Most modern communist propaganda is founded upon, or derives its appeal from, mere envy. When he adds (Chapter III.) that the carelessness of admitting to high office persons who are disloyal to the State may be among the predisposing causes of sedition, we are reminded of a favourite modern device—not unknown to the Government of India—of placating enemies, and of the case of a politician, who had done his best to hamper the State in a Great War, being permitted not long after to become its chief magistrate.

In dealing with revolutions in democracies, Aristotle makes the significant remark that their principal cause is the intemperate action of unscrupulous demagogues, who compel the propertied classes to combine in defence of their own interests (VIII., 5), and he reminds us that many practices which appear to be democratic are really the ruin of democracies. Unless the whole body of citizens by habit and education have absorbed the spirit of the polity, the wisest laws will be of no avail (VIII., 9).

## ii.

Such being Aristotle's views on some of the main problems of government, what would be his attitude, if he were alive to-day, towards modern socialist or communistic schemes?

He would, of course, have rejected laissez-faire individualism, and would have insisted that the State has further and higher functions than the mere provision of internal and external security. He might even have approved of some of our legislation that is vaguely termed 'socialistic' (as we may infer from VII., 5). On doles and State

assistance generally he remarks: 'The poor receive and need ever more and more, for such assistance is like water poured into a leaky vessel. Still, the true friend of the people should guard against extreme poverty, which lowers the character of the democracy.' All schemes of predatory legislation Aristotle would (as we have seen) have sternly condemned. To the exercise of voluntary and friendly charity he attached a high value, but he insisted on the fundamental principle that a man's work is worth (economically) what it will fetch, and that his salary or wages should be fixed not by his own desires but by the market value of his work. In a well-known chapter of the *Ethics* (V., 5) he discusses the function of money as a means of establishing what he calls proportional justice between different kinds of work, taking a builder and a shoe-maker as his examples, and he concludes: 'In reality things which are not homogeneous cannot be measured, but they can be measured well enough for practical purposes by means of our need.' Any system which aimed at equalizing the rewards of different kinds of work, or discouraging individual industry, efficiency, or inventiveness, he would have at once condemned as unnatural, and an impossible foundation for any enduring State.

What would he have said to the Socialist formula of 'The Nationalization of all the means of Production and Distribution'?

In his *Republic* Plato had sketched an ideal communist State. Plato himself admitted that, human nature being what it is, such a State could never be more than an ideal, and in the 'Laws' he gives us a sketch of his 'second-best' State, from which the communistic features are omitted. In the second book of his *Politics* Aristotle subjects the communist ideal to a rigorous examination. He points out that diversity in its members—analogueous to the diversity of parts in an organism—is of the essence of a State, and that the unification aimed at by communism would

tend to dissolve the State. For the true unity of the State is a moral unity. He points out that under communism (1) industry would be discouraged, because the natural relation between work and its reward would be upset. He saw clearly enough that the communistic principle is economically unsound, and is opposed to human nature. (2) The 'magic of property' would disappear from life. The loss would be not merely the loss of a selfish—though natural and universal—pleasure, for 'there is nothing that is more pleasant than to afford gratification or assistance to one's friends, and this is possible only if our property is our very own'. If communism, he adds, were a wise system, it would have been put into practice by his time. It has been left for the folly of the modern world to prove the good sense of antiquity.

The sort of legislation proposed by Plato, he continues, *has a plausible and philanthropic air, and makes easy converts of the sentimental, especially if its ideals are combined with attacks on the evils of society, which are represented as due to the absence of communism.* 'All these evils, however, are due not to the absence of communism but to the evil passions of human nature.' (II., 5.) Every word of this is as exactly true to-day as when it was written; and when he tells us that disputes are commoner between partners in a joint estate than between neighbours on separate estates, we are reminded that one of the reasons of the failure of the Building Guild was the quarrelsomeness of its members. He concludes that communism is 'impossible'—a conclusion which modern experiments have abundantly verified.

With regard to proposals to limit or equalize individual properties by law, he has some wise words. 'Those who frame such laws should remember what they tend to forget—that a legislator who limits the amount of property should also limit the number of children . . . clearly then he must aim not only at equalizing properties but at limiting their amount. And yet if he fix a moderate

limit for all, he will be no nearer his goal; for it is not the possessions but the desires of men which need to be equalized, and this is impossible, unless an adequate education is provided by the State' (II., 7). And again, 'The remedy for these evils is not so much the equalization of property as the training of the nobler type of men not to desire more, and the prevention of the lower from getting more' (*ib.*)—a moral achievement which Aristotle could have expected only in his ideal State.

iii.

That Aristotle was very much alive to the fundamental principles urged by the Eugenists can be inferred from his discussion of marriage (IV., 16). To the family, as the foundation of the State, and to biologically suitable marriages he attributed the highest importance. Not only should parents be healthy, but children should be healthy too, and, if necessary, the number of children produced for the State should be limited. Can anyone doubt that Aristotle would have approved of birth-control in the present conditions of this country? That the least valuable and most improvident elements of the population should be encouraged by various forms of State assistance to multiply at the expense of sounder elements is a thing that he would have regarded with abhorrence. He would have pointed out, with his usual logic, that the State should either let natural selection work unhindered, or, if any and every person can claim the right to be supported by the taxpayer, the State in self-defence should do its own work of selection, and abstain from 'fostering the feeble,' or helping the unfit to reproduce their kind. He does not himself mention the sterilization of the unfit as a possible remedy, but there can be no doubt that he would have approved the proposed legislation to that end.

iv.

It is not only on communist schemes as a proposed



remedy for the ills of society that Aristotle can give us guidance. Such schemes are usually supported by Marxian or semi-Marxian theories of wealth-production, as it actually takes place under natural (i.e. 'capitalistic') conditions. Here, too, Aristotle, properly interpreted, annihilates all Marxian doctrine. Capital, said Marx, is robbery. Wealth is produced by labour, and is simply condensed labour—which is about as true as the saying that all crime is condensed beer. The capitalist, says Marx, takes all except the minimum required for the support of the labourer. Marx's fallacies have been often enough refuted by genuine economists, but their neatest refutation, founded on Aristotle, is still comparatively unknown. It is to be found in Mr. F. W. Bain's *Principle of Wealth Creation*, wherein it is demonstrated that the four Aristotelian causes give a complete account of the process. Mr. Bain's work is now out of print, and it is high time that another edition was published, for it has been strangely neglected by professional economists. The present writer, some years ago, was studying Ruskin's economics, and turned to a well-known Dictionary of Political Economy to see what the authorities had to say on the subject. Ruskin's name was omitted! The reputation that Mr. Bain has won in a very different field, as a writer of delicate imaginative prose, has perhaps tended to obscure the value of his contribution to economic theory; but that so brilliant and original a book as *The Principle of Wealth Creation*—even if the germ of it is in Aristotle—should have been allowed to fall into comparative oblivion, is no credit to our professors.

Let us then take a brief glance at the leading idea of Mr. Bain's book.

Every commodity—the commodity being *the* type of wealth in a modern community—has four causes:

- (1) The matter out of which it is made.
- (2) The design to which it owes its form or shape.

(3) The labour which actually shaped the matter into form.

(4) The need or demand of the consumer or purchaser, who looks to the function or end of the thing, and expresses his demand by means of money.

Now these are simply the four Aristotelian causes—material, formal, efficient, and final. G. H. Lewes thought fit to belittle Aristotle's insight when he declared that these causes were not susceptible of verification; but if we accepted only what could be verified by being weighed and measured in a laboratory, we should get very little way in any of the sciences that deal with man.

Let us take a bicycle as an example of a modern commodity and analyse it as Aristotle would have done. It is made of metal and rubber, provided originally by Nature, and purchased by the manufacturer from the holder of raw material. Its form is the result of the brainwork of several generations of inventors, the fittest of whose ideas have survived. This form is imparted to it by workmen, using highly specialised machinery. This machinery, a compound of work and form, is, like the bicycle itself, in its parts and their combination, the result of the continually improved designs of inventors. It is set up in a factory erected by money borrowed from the capitalist or from shareholders, on land rented from the landlord.

Land, raw material and capital all come under the head of the material cause; management, invention, organisation, etc., under the head of the formal cause. Communist schemes of expropriating the capitalist (or shareholders) and discouraging the inventor and employer, would put out of action two of the causes—the material and the formal—of wealth production, would fatally cripple the power of the final cause (demand) and would even—as the example of Russia and of experiments like the Building Guild prove—gravely impair the operation of the efficient cause (Labour).

The application of Aristotle's causes to the problem of wealth production, not only provides us with a clear-cut proof of the economic impossibility of communist theories (whether considered as a diagnosis or as a remedy of economic ills), but gives us also an instrument of historical criticism. Thus Quesnay and the Physiocrats over-emphasised a part of the material cause (land), Adam Smith, Ricardo and Marx the efficient cause (labour), while the exchange-value school made too much of the final cause (demand). These and other applications of the four-fold principle are admirably brought out by Mr. Bain.

## v.

We are now in a position to form some conception of the advice which Aristotle would give us if he could be summoned from the shades to view our modern world.

Insisting as he always did on the difference between the ideally best constitution and the best constitution possible under particular historical and political conditions, he would probably agree that any other government than that of 'extreme' democracy (i.e. government by public opinion and the general will operating through adult franchise) was impossible in England now. He would warn us that anything approaching to communism, syndicalism, or the 'nationalization of all means of production and distribution' would be economically disastrous and politically fatal, for it would eventually involve the ruin of the State. To those who would fain abolish the State or replace it by a collection of self-governing groups, he would reply that they were aiming at what was impossible, and, in a world composed of competing national States, undesirable.

In our industrial problems he would insist on the necessity of the encouragement of the virtues of industry, efficiency, inventiveness and thrift, both among employers and employed.

He would point out that our material progress had been

very lop-sided; that in discouraging our agriculture and sacrificing it to the supposed interests of the masses in our towns, we were deliberately throwing away a source of national strength and of political stability; and he would warn our politicians that the continued and increasing bribery of the proletariat, by benefits at the expense of others, in exchange for votes, was simply the rake's progress of the demagogue that had brought more than one Greek democracy to ruin in his own day.

Lastly he would say that in two important matters we had been foolishly heedless; that our system of national education had not been sufficiently designed to train up our citizens in the spirit of the State, and that we had made it too easy for the least valuable types to increase and multiply at the expense of the provident and the thrifty. 'You must educate, but educate wisely,' he would say, 'and you must exercise some selection as regards both the quantity and the quality of your citizens. Only by so doing will you be able to approximate to the end of the State—the good life.'

# A FRENCH CRITICISM OF NEWMAN

By FREDERIC MANNING

*Cardinal Newman.* Bertram Newman. G. Bell & Sons.  
1925. 8s. 6d. net.

*The Mystery of Newman.* Henri Brémond. Translated by  
H. C. Corrance. Williams & Norgate, 1907.

*The Experience of Newman.* R. Fernandez. THE  
CRITERION, October, 1924.

ONCE we have known the influence of Newman, we do not escape from it easily. It renews itself in us. We return to him; and we return from so many directions, and for so many reasons: for the sake of his dialectical brilliance, his rhetorical power, his devotional fervour, and his imaginative vision. In his prose we hear the last echo of the eighteenth century, before the triumph of democracy, the building of Babel, and the confusion of tongues. Its lucidity, its severity of form are an unconscious tribute to the rationalism, which he detested, of that great age. In his style there is no waste. Even while we are admiring the elaborate complexity of its organization, we delight in the ease and precision with which it functions. And these qualities of his style and mind, the lucidity, the restraint, the dialectical subtlety and adroitness, the severity of form, the accomplishment of manner, result not only from his own originating genius, the creative energy of the artist, but also from an intellectual discipline imposed on him, as he well knew, by the action of other minds, encompassing, deflecting, and even to some extent controlling his own. A man's character, and the character of his thought, are conditioned and defined by the character

of the age in which he lives; they have a reciprocal action on each other; they become so closely involved that we cannot separate them. If he is to move his age, to act upon it or influence it in any way, for good or ill, he must enter into communion with it; his own mind must find some common measure with the minds of other men; he must seek some common ground not only with his friends, in order to aid them, but with his adversaries, in order to defeat them; and if we are, on our side, to appreciate his thought or action, our judgment must rest on some historical basis.

Recently THE CRITERION published an article on "The Experience of Newman", by M. Ramon Fernandez. His criticism was brilliant, and distinguished, and acute, as so much French criticism is. It was also to my mind partial and incomplete. I was quite willing at first to surrender to his persuasion, and to enjoy, which implies some measure of agreement, his way of developing his subject; and then suddenly I found him saying that 'it may be of great interest to a Catholic to bend Newman's thought in the direction of mysticism, and on the whole he has a perfect right to do so', or speaking of 'the several different directions in which Newman's thought may be prolonged'. Now, we may take over Newman's principles to apply them in conditions of which he was unaware, and with an intention of which he was innocent, as though we are only extending his personal influence and producing the logical consequences of his thought, but he is not implicated in the matter, and our historical conscience should prevent us from attributing to him, or from assuming even that he might possibly have accepted the conclusions to which his principles lead us, when we apply them in our own changed and entirely new relation.

For, after all, thought interests us only when it is characteristic, that is to say when we can see it personified and in action. Then it represents a single, a continuous,

and a complete experience; we can measure, at least approximately, the force of the impulse in which it originates by the strength of the resistance which it overcomes; or follow the curve of flight to its term, comparing or contrasting the aim with the achievement. But the experience has been completed. We cannot bend it or prolong it in any direction. Thought will have a certain colour, form, and direction in the mind of Plato, but colour, form, and direction are changed immediately it has been appropriated and assimilated by the mind of Aristotle. Pascal appropriated and assimilated the thought of Montaigne, and Newman in a well-known passage opposes them to each other; or to take another instance which he gives if only because it bears upon his own personal experience: 'whatever be the resemblance between Saint Augustine's doctrine of Predestination and the tenet of Calvin upon it, the two really differ from each other *toto coelo* in significance and effect, in consequence of the place they hold in the systems in which they are respectively incorporated, just as shades and tints show so differently in a painting according to the masses of colour to which they are attached. But in spite of this a man may so hold the doctrine of personal election as a Calvinist, as to be able still to hold it as a Catholic.' He is scrupulous, one observes, to maintain unbroken the continuity of his own development, he will not discard the fact of that 'inward conversion of which I was conscious (and of which I still am more certain than that I have hands and feet)' because of its Calvinistic circumstances. *Gratia Dei sum id quod sum*, he might have exclaimed with Lemos; and every now and again when his argument seems to verge on casuistry, he breaks up that impression of it which is gradually forming in our minds, by some such stroke of disconcerting sincerity.

M. Ramon Fernandez exhibits the thought of Newman to us at the moment it enters his own mind, a mind already

prepossessed by the ideas of Nietzsche, of Bergson, and of James. He sees Newman against a background and bathed in the atmosphere of these ideas. Newman's mind, as he tells us in the *Apologia* and elsewhere, was prepossessed by the ideas of Scott, Southey, Wordsworth, and Coleridge. His world shared these prepossessions. He was neither a precursor, nor like Saint Paul, ἑκτρομα; he was of his own age, and his mind is filled with the reminiscences of past ages. Take, for example, a passage cited by M. Fernandez: 'Faith . . . advances and decides on antecedent probabilities, that is on grounds which do not reach so far as to touch precisely the desired conclusion, though they tend towards it, and may come very near it.' M. Fernandez compares this view 'with the celebrated theory expounded by Bergson in his *Introduction à la Métaphysique* . . . the converging conceptual rays and the leap in the void which constitute intuition'; but, as a matter of fact Newman is only remembering a passage in Locke, and using it with his own particular intention.<sup>1</sup> Locke, Newman, Bergson, note a tendency in the human mind to decide on antecedent probabilities: Newman uses the fact of this tendency in the furtherance of his own design, which is to clothe faith, an arbitrary act of the mind, with the forms and attributes of reason. He admits, of what he calls the Illative Sense, that 'it supplies no common measure between mind and mind as being nothing else than a personal gift or acquisition'; he tells us that Real Assent, 'as the experience which it presupposes, thwarts rather than promotes the intercourse of man with man'; and 'that individual propositions about the concrete' (that is to say contingent matter) 'almost cease to be, and are diluted and starved into abstract notions.' Reading again these and similar passages, I find myself repeating the words of M. Fernandez, 'that all the ingenuity in the

<sup>1</sup> *Sermons before the University*, p. 223-4; *Grammar of Assent*, p. 161. M. Brémond notices a resemblance.



world cannot find a third evidence between rational evidence and mystic evidence.'

Where I differ from, or at least find a difficulty in following M. Fernandez, is at that point where he tells us that Newman's belief is relative to religious experience, not to mystic experience. He admits that he accentuates the difference; but he does not help me when he adds that 'all critics familiar with religious writings will recognize a difference in kind between those of a Saint John of the Cross, or a Marie de l'Incarnation and those of a Newman or a Pascal', because we are not dealing with the question of religious writings, where one might perhaps admit a difference in kind; but with the question of religious experience, where it is only a difference of degree which is admissible. Mystic and religious experience are not mutually exclusive. The distinction which apparently M. Fernandez wished to make may be illustrated by Father Tyrrell's words: 'For Newman he and his God were the only two, almost co-ordinate, self-luminous realities, the two fixed foci of the ellipse round which revolved the world with its burden of suffering humanity, as so much nebula, dream-stuff, phantasmagoria. . . . If for Spinoza this ellipse had been destroyed by the absorption of Self into God, it is the inverse process—the absorption of God into Self—which more commonly threatens it with destruction; and the personality of a man like Newman is created and developed by the struggle to maintain each member of this unstable system in its due place and relation, and to intensify the spiritual self by subjecting all the forces of conquered egotism to its service.'<sup>1</sup> I could wish the last clause away, but there it is. Turn from this figure of the ellipse to the words in which M. Ramon Fernandez passes definitely beyond the experience of Newman: 'We are so weak, so imperfectly

<sup>1</sup> *The Mystery of Newman*. Henri Brémond. Translated by H. C. Corrance, p. xii.—xiii.

weaned from Christianity, that we find it hard to conceive a belief which would not put us in relation with an actual protecting reality, and in order to merit this protection we are always ready to humiliate ourselves, to empty ourselves of all our substance, to attribute the merit of our own effort to invisible hands. Let us for once have the courage to put nullity in its true place, reality in its true place, to make fulness within us and void around us . . . and he eludes us, a Dionysian reveller, to close in appropriate dithyrambics.

But when our admiration of this metamorphosis of Newman into Nietzsche is over and the applause subsides, we are left with, what? With an intellectualized theory of magic: 'the concrete qualified individual,' as M. Fernandez has it, is, in Hegel's words, 'the particular, contingent, empirical self-consciousness of man, which although it is only mere passion, knows itself to be higher in its self-consciousness than nature. . . . To religion essentially pertains the moment of objectivity, and this means that spiritual power shows itself as a mode of the Universal relatively to self-consciousness, for the individual, for the particular empirical consciousness. . . . But we do not find this in magic as such. It is the individual consciousness as this particular consciousness, and consequently the very negation of the Universal, which is what has the power here, not a God in the magician, but the magician himself.' Sir James Fraser<sup>1</sup> tells us that the fundamental conception of magic is identical with that of modern science; 'underlying the whole system is a faith implicit but real and firm, in the order and uniformity of nature. . . . The fatal flaw of magic lies not in a general assumption of a sequence of events determined by law, but in the total misconception of the nature of the particular laws which govern that sequence,' and he observes that

<sup>1</sup> *The Magic Art*. Vol. I., p. 221. Hegel is quoted from the appendix to that volume.

the distinction between religion on the one side, and science and magic on the other, 'turns on their answer to the crucial question: Are the forces which govern the world conscious and personal or unconscious and impersonal?'

Both the mystic and the religious experience start from the assumption that these forces are conscious and personal. The evolution of religion out of the primitive and implicit theory of magic, the question of the measure in which the element of magic survives in all religion are nothing to my present purpose. It is not difficult however to conceive a general notion of magic, religion, and mysticism as three intersecting circles having a certain ground in common. We are concerned here not with a general notion of this kind, but with the historical development of a particular experience. Open the *Apologia* and read: 'my imagination ran on unknown influences, on magical powers, and talismans. . . . I was very superstitious. . . . When I was fifteen . . . a great change of thought took place in me. I fell under the influence of a definite creed, and received into my intelligence impressions of dogma, which, through God's mercy have never been effaced.' To my mind this conversion was a mystic experience: it was constant in him; it survived all the vicissitudes of his career. It may be attributed of course to one of those crises of adolescence, of which it is possible to cite numerous instances; and the fact that it was accompanied by an implicit resolve to lead a celibate life may seem to point that way, but these considerations do not affect its strength and constancy. Whatever influences had converged to produce it, however various the forms and symbols and notions, through which he will attempt to express and interpret it to us, the fact remains that henceforth he is filled with an abiding sense of the presence of God in him, 'enthroned at the very springs of thought and affection.'

He is conscious of God in him; he is conscious also of himself as an instrument of God; and because he does not

Ollm 56, N<sup>o</sup> 22

K7.4

remain a contemplative, but turns to 'the foolishness of preaching', is he the less a mystic? His is not, in Milton's phrase, a fugitive and cloistered virtue; if he is to touch and move the world he must find some common measure with other minds. How else is he to act upon his age? 'It will be our wisdom to avail ourselves of language, as far as it will go, but to aim mainly by means of it to stimulate, in those to whom we address ourselves, a mode of thinking and trains of thought similar to our own, leading them on by their own independent action, not by any syllogistic compulsion. Hence it is that an intellectual school will always have something of an esoteric character; for it is an assemblage of minds that think; their bond is unity of thought, and their words become a sort of *tessera*, not expressing thought, but symbolizing it.' 74159

'Leading them on by their own independent action': we have only to echo words originally naive, and they become irony. They seem to reflect the illusion each one of us has of his own freedom. Let us look at this method in action, taking a particular case. In January, 1836, Newman met, and afterwards dined with Sir James Stephen, giving an account of the conversation in a letter to Hurrell Froude.<sup>1</sup> It is a most characteristic and significant letter. He was impressed by Stephen, and anxious to show that Stephen had appreciated him. Stephen did not like the *Arians*, but thought the two volumes of *Sermons* important 'as showing we had something in us which would be of essential service in the present state of philosophy and religion. He seemed to treat with utter scorn the notion that we were favouring Popery. . . . The sermons had struck upon a new vein; it would be a great benefit done to the country if Quietism could be shown to be consistent with good sense and activity. Quietists and Mystics were commonly weak and eccentric. . . . The most subtle enemy Christianity had ever had was Benthamism', I

<sup>1</sup> Letters and Correspondence. Vol. ii., p. 138.

suppose in its *libertin*, agnostic, and Epicurean aspects. 'He wanted from me a new philosophy. He wanted Christianity developed to meet the age. . . . There was much truth in Benthamism; that was its danger. Legislation and political economy were new sciences, they involved *facts*: Christianity might claim and rule them, but it could not annihilate them.'

So much for the approach of Stephen to Newman. In this hurried and intimate letter, there follows Newman's impressions concerning his host: 'I could not in my first talk with him make out to my satisfaction that he was not too much of a philosopher (in Coleridge's way), looking at the Church, sacraments, doctrines, *etc.*, rather as symbols of a philosophy than as *truths*—as the mere accidental types of principles. But when I dined with him (*tête-à-tête*) I found he was far from this. He is perplexed; wishes for an infallible guide; made the most impressive remarks on life not being long enough for controversy; said he would be a papist if he could, and listened with great interest, though not clearly taking me in when I brought forward the argument of Tradition. Indeed, go where I will, "the fields are ready for harvest" and none to reap them. If I might choose my place in the Church I would (as far as I can see) be Master of the Temple. I am sure from what I can see of the young lawyers I could do something with them. You and Keble are the philosophers and I the rhetorician.'

One would not say of the persons in this conversation that they revealed themselves to each other. But Stephen can see in the living Newman, both the mystic, from whom M. Fernandez turns away, and the Quietist, at whom M. Brémond is merely amused. One remembers the misunderstandings arising from what was called 'economy'; one connects it with the esoteric character that an intellectual school will always, necessarily, have, with the '*tessera*', not expressing thought, but symbolizing it'; and with

the aim of stimulating in others 'a mode of thinking and trains of thought similar to our own', inducing in them, as it were, a kind of subjective *μίμησις* of that otherwise incommunicable mystic experience. Then one accepts his own account of himself: 'I have a vivid perception of the consequences of certain admitted principles, have a considerable intellectual capacity for drawing them out, have the refinement to admire them, and a rhetorical or histrionic power to represent them.'

As M. Fernandez quotes the passage from one of the University Sermons, where Newman, utilizing a passage from Locke, describes faith as a process of reason, let us place this passage beside the closing words of *The Grammar of Assent*, in which after describing the nature of the minds to which Christianity appeals, Newman continues: 'Such minds it addresses both through the intellect and through the imagination; creating a certitude of its truth by arguments too various for direct enumeration, too personal and deep for words, too powerful and concurrent for refutation. Nor need reason come first and faith second (though this is the logical order), but one and the same teaching is in different aspects both object and proof, and elicits one complex act of inference and assent. It speaks to us one by one, and it is received by us one by one, as the counterpart, so to say, of ourselves, and is real as we are real.'<sup>1</sup> The whole tendency of this and similar passages is to show that mystic experience cannot be conveyed to us in the form of rational evidence, but only by a rhetorical and histrionic power of representing it; the notion that 'belief adds to cognition, passes beyond experience, invents, creates', is only true in the sense that it is true of music, poetry, and of the arts generally; and this representative power, Plato would have classed under the division of magic, and mimicry and the making of images.

<sup>1</sup> In considering Newman's thought, I am constantly reminded of the Platonic criticism of the Protagorean theory of truth (*Theaetetus*, *Sophist*).

M. Fernandez comes to realize the difficulty, for though he tells us on one page, that in Newman 'intelligence and faith mutually check each other, and yet an attentive reader cannot accuse him of the least artifice'; towards the end of his article he reverses this decision in the statement that 'Here faith is clearly in opposition to thought, which could only claim a part, however modest or moderated, by a pure artifice'. To my mind the artifice is a sophistry.

But even if one ranks Newman among the sophists and rhetoricians, one no more doubts his sincerity, than one doubts that of Saint Paul because of the passage beginning: 'For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant to all, that I might gain the more'<sup>1</sup>: for here too is the power of representation, a kind of subjective *μίμησις*. What I feel in Newman, and feel as poignantly as though I were listening to his own voice, is the tense emotion restrained under that classic severity of form. The philosophy of action which one is tempted to find in him is the result of the direct and indirect influence of Coleridge. During the spring of 1835, Newman says, he read parts of Coleridge's works for the first time, and adds 'I am surprised how much I thought mine is to be found there.' One recalls the words of Pascal: 'Ce n'est pas dans Montaigne, mais dans *moi* que je trouve tout ce que j'y vois.' Partly of course the resemblance of their opinions arises from the fact that these had a common source in Saint Augustine. The passage quoted by Coleridge in his introduction to *Aids to Reflection* might have stood on the title-page of *The Grammar of Assent*: 'Sic accipite, ut mereamini intelligere. Fides enim debet praecedere intellectum' (though this is not the logical order) 'ut sit intellectus fidei praemium.' 'They go out of themselves to meet him who is unseen,' and M. Fernandez' gloss on the words: 'Religious thought is marching by a star, but by an invisible star', recall to us Coleridge's

<sup>1</sup> 1 Corinthians ix., 19.

'Awakened by the cock-crow . . . the Christian pilgrim sets out in the morning twilight; while yet the truth . . . is below the horizon'. They are using the same concrete images. Coleridge insists on the originating action of thought; and, as his manner is, distinguishes between thought as an activity of the mind, and attention as its receptivity; but he proposes to restore the terms '*objective* and *subjective*, *objective* and *subjective* reality, etc., as substitutes for *real* and *notional*, to the exclusion of the false antithesis between *real* and *ideal*'. It is equally interesting to note this divergence. The Newman of M. Fernandez is, in the main, the Newman influenced by Coleridge; but could Newman have written of a mystical experience, those lines saturated with the spirit of the magician:

Moments awful . . .

When power streamed from thee, and thy soul received  
The light reflected as a light bestowed ?

Here, clearly, it is 'the individual consciousness as this particular consciousness, and consequently the very negation of the Universal' which has the power.

Newman had the more active, the more athletic mind. It was also more English. It had been disciplined in the severe school of Locke, Berkeley, and Hume, whose traditions the rejected Whately to some extent continued. It had known, and feared, the fascination of Gibbon. These, and Cicero had taught him the mastery of form, through which he could express his own emotional nature, the contemporary ideas which nourished it. If his tendency was to seek the image instead of the formula, it was because he possessed the creative energy of the poet. He was neither as profound, nor as cumbrous and diffuse as Coleridge. He sought to rest in a system which he could not create, and even because he could not create one; but since he was and remained always both a mystic and a poet, he is not only a master of literature, but an interpreter of life. When we think of him under these aspects



we should not forget the service he did to rationalism, in criticising it, in refining it, in communicating to it his own subtlety; nor should we forget the strength and substance he drew from it, and the discipline it imposed on his imaginative vision.

# ON BEING ILL

By VIRGINIA WOOLF

CONSIDERING how common illness is, how tremendous the spiritual change that it brings, how astonishing, when the lights of health go down, the undiscovered countries that are then disclosed, what wastes and deserts of the soul a slight attack of influenza brings to light, what precipices and lawns sprinkled with bright flowers a little rise of temperature reveals, what ancient and obdurate oaks are uprooted in us in the act of sickness, how we go down into the pit of death and feel the waters of annihilation close above our heads and wake thinking to find ourselves in the presence of the angels and the harpers when we have a tooth out and come to the surface in the dentist's arm chair and confuse his ' Rinse the mouth—rinse the mouth ' with the greeting of the Deity stooping from the floor of Heaven to welcome us—when we think of this and infinitely more, as we are so frequently forced to think of it, it becomes strange indeed that illness has not taken its place with love, battle, and jealousy among the prime themes of literature. Novels, one would have thought, would have been devoted to influenza; epic poems to typhoid; odes to pneumonia, lyrics to toothache. But no; with a few exceptions—De Quincey attempted something of the sort in *The Opium Eater*; there must be a volume or two about disease scattered through the pages of Proust—literature does its best to maintain that its concern is with the mind; that the body is a sheet of plain glass through which the soul looks straight and clear, and, save for one or two passions such as desire and greed, is null, negligible and non-existent. On the contrary, the very opposite is true. All day, all night the body intervenes; blunts or sharpens,

colours or discolours, turns to wax in the warmth of June, hardens to tallow in the murk of February. The creature within can only gaze through the pane—smudged or rosy; it cannot separate off from the body like the sheath of a knife or the pod of a pea for a single instant; it must go through the whole unending procession of changes, heat and cold, comfort and discomfort, hunger and satisfaction, health and illness, until there comes the inevitable catastrophe; the body smashes itself to smithereens, and the soul (it is said) escapes. But of all this daily drama of the body there is no record. People write always about the doings of the mind; the thoughts that come to it; its noble plans; how it has civilised the universe. They show it ignoring the body in the philosopher's turret; or kicking the body, like an old leather football, across leagues of snow and desert in the pursuit of conquest or discovery. Those great wars which it wages by itself, with the mind a slave to it, in the solitude of the bedroom against the assault of fever or the oncome of melancholia, are neglected. Nor is the reason far to seek. To look these things squarely in the face would need the courage of a lion tamer; a robust philosophy; a reason rooted in the bowels of the earth. Short of these, this monster, the body, this miracle, its pain, will soon make us taper into mysticism, or rise, with rapid beats of the wings, into the raptures of transcendentalism. More practically speaking, the public would say that a novel devoted to influenza lacked plot; they would complain that there was no love in it—wrongly however, for illness often takes on the disguise of love, and plays the same odd tricks, investing certain faces with divinity, setting us to wait, hour after hour, with pricked ears for the creaking of a stair, and wreathing the faces of the absent (plain enough in health, Heaven knows) with a new significance, while the mind concocts a thousand legends and romances about them for which it has neither time nor liberty

in health. Finally, among the drawbacks of illness as matter for literature there is the poverty of the language. English, which can express the thoughts of Hamlet and the tragedy of Lear, has no words for the shiver and the headache. It has all grown one way. The merest schoolgirl, when she falls in love, has Shakespeare, Donne, Keats to speak her mind for her; but let a sufferer try to describe a pain in his head to a doctor and language at once runs dry. There is nothing ready made for him. He is forced to coin words himself, and, taking his pain in one hand, and a lump of pure sound in the other (as perhaps the inhabitants of Babel did in the beginning) so to crush them together that a brand new word in the end drops out. Probably it will be something laughable. For who of English birth can take liberties with the language? To us it is a sacred thing and therefore doomed to die, unless the Americans, whose genius is so much happier in the making of new words than in the disposition of the old, will come to our help and set the springs aflow. Yet it is not only a new language that we need, primitive, subtle, sensual, obscene, but a new hierarchy of the passions; love must be deposed in favour of a temperature of 104; jealousy give place to the pangs of sciatica; sleeplessness play the part of villain, and the hero become a white liquid with a sweet taste—that mighty Prince with the moths' eyes and the feathered feet, one of whose names is Chloral.

But to return to the invalid. 'I am in bed with influenza,' he says, and actually complains that he gets no sympathy. 'I am in bed with influenza'—but what does that convey of the great experience; how the world has changed its shape; the tools of business grown remote; the sounds of festival become romantic like a merry-go-round heard across far fields; and friends have changed, some putting on a strange beauty, others deformed to the squatness of toads, while the whole landscape of life lies remote and

fair, like the shore seen from a ship far out at sea, and he is now exalted on a peak and needs no help from man or God, and now grovels supine on the floor glad of a kick from a housemaid—the experience cannot be imparted and, as is always the way with these dumb things, his own suffering serves but to wake memories in his friends' minds of *their* influenzas, *their* aches and pains which went unwept last February, and now cry out, desperately, clamorously, for the divine relief of sympathy.

But sympathy we cannot have. Wisest Fate says no. If her children, weighted as they already are with sorrow, were to take on them that burden too, adding in imagination other pains to their own, buildings would cease to rise, roads would peter out into grassy tracks; there would be an end of music and of painting; one great sigh alone would rise to Heaven, and the only attitudes for men and women would be those of horror and despair. As it is, there is always some little distraction—an organ grinder at the corner of the hospital, a shop with book or trinket to decoy one past the prison or the workhouse, some absurdity of cat or dog to prevent one from turning the old beggar's hieroglyphic of misery into volumes of sordid suffering, and the vast effort of sympathy which those barracks of pain and discipline, those dried symbols of sorrow, ask us to exert on their behalf, is uneasily shuffled off for another time. Sympathy nowadays is dispensed chiefly by the laggards and failures, women for the most part (in whom the obsolete exists so strangely side by side with anarchy and newness), who, having dropped out of the race, have time to spend upon fantastic and unprofitable excursions; C.L., for example, who sitting by the stale sickroom fire builds up with touches at once sober and imaginative, the nursery fender, the loaf, the lamp, barrel organs in the street, and all the simple old wives' tales of pinafores and escapades; A.R., the rash, the magnanimous, who if you fancied a giant tortoise to solace

you, or a theorbo to cheer you would ransack the markets of London and procure them somehow, wrapped in paper, before the end of the day; the frivolous K.T., dressed in silks and feathers, painted and powdered (which takes time too) as if for a banquet of kings and queens, who spends her whole brightness in the gloom of the sick room, and makes the medicine bottles ring and the flames shoot up with her gossip and her mimicry. But such follies have had their day; civilisation points to a different goal; if the cities of the Middle West are to blaze with electric light, Mr. Insull 'must keep twenty or thirty engagements every day of his working months'—and then, what place is there for the tortoise and the theorbo?

There is, let us confess it (and illness is the great confessional) a childish outspokenness in illness; things are said, truths blurted out, which the cautious respectability of health conceals. About sympathy for example; we can do without it. That illusion of a world so shaped that it echoes every groan, of human beings so tied together by common needs and fears that a twitch at one wrist jerks another, where however strange your experience other people have had it too, where however far you travel in your own mind someone has been there before you—is all an illusion. We do not know our own souls, let alone the souls of others. Human beings do not go hand in hand the whole stretch of the way. There is a virgin forest, tangled, pathless, in each; a snow field where even the print of birds' feet is unknown. Here we go alone, and like it better so. Always to have sympathy, always to be accompanied, always to be understood would be intolerable. But in health the genial pretence must be kept up and the effort renewed—to communicate, to civilise, to share, to cultivate the desert, educate the native, to work by day together and by night to sport. In illness this make-believe ceases. Directly the bed is called for, or, sunk deep among pillows in one chair, we raise our feet even an inch above

the ground on another, we cease to be soldiers in the army of the upright; we become deserters. They march to battle. We float with the sticks on the stream; helter skelter with the dead leaves on the lawn, irresponsible and disinterested and able, perhaps for the first time for years, to look round, to look up—to look, for example, at the sky.

The first impression of that extraordinary spectacle is strangely overcoming. Ordinarily to look at the sky for any length of time is impossible. Pedestrians would be impeded and disconcerted by a public sky-gazer. What snatches we get of it are mutilated by chimneys and churches, serve as a background for man, signify wet weather or fine, daub windows gold, and, filling in the branches, complete the pathos of dishevelled autumnal plane trees in London squares. Now, become as the leaf or the daisy, lying recumbent, staring straight up, the sky is discovered to be something so different from this that really it is a little shocking. This then has been going on all the time without our knowing it!—this incessant making up of shapes and casting them down, this buffeting of clouds together, and drawing vast trains of ships and waggons from North to South, this incessant ringing up and down of curtains of light and shade, this interminable experiment with gold shafts and blue shadows, with veiling the sun and unveiling it, with making rock ramparts and wafting them away—this endless activity, with the waste of Heaven knows how many million horse power of energy, has been left to work its will year in year out. The fact seems to call for comment and indeed for censure. Some one should write to *The Times* about it. Use should be made of it. One should not let this gigantic cinema play perpetually to an empty house. But watch a little longer and another emotion drowns the stirrings of civic ardour. Divinely beautiful it is also divinely heartless. Immeasurable resources are used for some purpose which

has nothing to do with human pleasure or human profit. If we were all laid prone, frozen, stiff, still the sky would be experimenting with its blues and golds. Perhaps then, looking down at something very small and close and familiar, we shall find sympathy. Let us examine the rose. We have seen it so often flowering in bowls, connected it so often with beauty in its prime, that we have forgotten how it stands, still and steady, throughout an entire afternoon in the earth. It preserves a demeanour of perfect dignity and self-possession. The suffusion of its petals is of inimitable rightness. Now perhaps one deliberately falls; now all the flowers, the voluptuous purple, the creamy, in whose waxen flesh a spoon has left a swirl of cherry juice; gladioli; dahlias; lilies, sacerdotal, ecclesiastical; flowers with prim cardboard collars tinged apricot and amber, all gently incline their heads to the breeze—all, with the exception of the heavy sunflower, who proudly acknowledges the sun at midday, and perhaps at midnight rebuffs the moon. There they stand; and it is of these, the stillest, the most self-sufficient of all things that human beings have made companions; these that symbolise their passions, decorate their festivals, and lie (as if they knew sorrow) upon the pillows of the dead! Wonderful to relate, poets have found religion in nature; people live in the country to learn virtue from plants. It is in their indifference that they are comforting. That snowfield of the mind, where man has not trodden, is visited by the cloud, kissed by the falling petal, as, in another sphere, it is the great artists, the Miltons, the Popes, who console, not by their thought of us, but by their forgetfulness.

Meanwhile, with the heroism of the ant or the bee, however indifferent the sky or disdainful the flowers, the army of the upright marches to battle. Mrs. Jones catches her train. Mr. Smith mends his motor. The cows are driven home to be milked. Men thatch the roof. The dogs bark. The rooks, rising in a net, fall in a net



upon the elm trees. The wave of life flings itself out indefatigably. It is only the recumbent who know what, after all, nature is at no pains to conceal—that she in the end will conquer; the heat will leave the world; stiff with frost we shall cease to drag our feet about the fields; ice will lie thick upon factory and engine; the sun will go out. Even so, when the whole earth is sheeted and slippery some undulation, some irregularity of surface will mark the boundary of an ancient garden, and there, thrusting its head up undaunted in the starlight, the rose will flower, the crocus will burn. But with the hook of life still in us still we must wriggle. We cannot stiffen peaceably into glassy mounds. Even the recumbent spring up at the mere imagination of frost about the toes and stretch out to avail themselves of the universal hope—Heaven, Immortality. Surely, since men have been wishing all these ages, they will have wished something into existence; there will be some green isle for the mind to rest on even if the foot cannot plant itself there. The co-operative imagination of mankind must have drawn some firm outline. But no. One opens *The Morning Post* and reads the Bishop of Lichfield on Heaven—a vague discourse, weak, watery, inconclusive. One watches the church-goers file in to those gallant temples where, on the bleakest day, in the wettest fields, lamps will be burning, bells will be ringing, and however the autumn leaves may shuffle and the winds sigh outside, hopes and desires will be changed to beliefs and certainties within. Do they look serene? Are their eyes filled with the light of their sublime conviction? Would one of them dare leap straight into Heaven off Beachy Head? None but a simpleton would ask such questions; the little company of believers lags and drags and prys; the mother is worn; the father tired. The Bishops are tired too. Frequently we read in the same paper how the Diocese has presented its bishop with a motor-car; how at the presentation some leading citizen has remarked,

with obvious truth, that the Bishop has more need of motor-cars than any of his flock. But this Heaven making needs no motor cars; it needs time and concentration. It needs the imagination of a poet. Left to ourselves we can but trifle with it—imagine Pepys in Heaven, adumbrate little interviews with celebrated people on tufts of thyme, soon fall into gossip about such of our friends as have stayed in Hell, or, worse still, revert again to earth and choose, since there is no harm in choosing, to live over and over, now as man, now as woman, as sea-captain, court lady, Emperor, farmer's wife, in splendid cities and on remote moors, in Teheran and Tunbridge Wells, at the time of Pericles or Arthur, Charlemagne, or George the Fourth—to live and live till we have lived out those embryo lives which attend about us in early youth and been consumed by that tyrannical 'I', who has conquered so far as this world is concerned but shall not, if wishing can alter it, usurp Heaven too, and condemn us, who have played our parts here as William or Amelia, to remain William or Amelia for ever. Left to ourselves we speculate thus carnally. We need the poets to imagine for us. The duty of Heaven-making should be attached to the office of Poet Laureate.

Indeed, it is to the poets that we turn. Illness makes us disinclined for the long campaigns that prose exacts. We cannot command all our faculties and keep our reason and our judgment and our memory at attention while chapter swings on top of chapter, and, as one settles into place, we must be on the watch for the coming of the next, until the whole structure—arches, towers, battlements—stands firm on its foundations. *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* is not the book for influenza, nor *The Golden Bowl*, nor *Madame Bovary*. On the other hand, with responsibility shelved and reason in abeyance—for who is going to exact criticism from an invalid or sound sense from the bed-ridden?—other tastes assert themselves; sudden, fitful, intense. We rifle the poets of their

flowers. We break off a line or two and let them open in the depths of the mind, spread their bright wings, swim like coloured fish in green waters :

and oft at eve  
Visits the herds along the twilight meadows  
wandering in thick flocks along the mountains  
Shepherded by the slow, unwilling wind.

Or there is a whole three volume novel to be mused over and spread out in a verse of Hardy's, or a sentence of La Bruyères. We dip in Lamb's Letters—some prose writers are to be read as poets—and find 'I am a sanguinary murderer of time, and would kill him inchmeal just now. But the snake is vital' and who shall explain the delight of that? or open Rimbaud and read

O saisons, ô châteaux  
Quelle âme est sans défauts?

and who shall rationalise the charm? In illness words seem to possess a mystic quality. We grasp what is beyond their surface meaning, gather instinctively this, that, and the other—a sound, a colour, here a stress, there a pause—which the poet, knowing words to be meagre in comparison with ideas, has strewn about his page to evoke, when collected, a state of mind which neither words can express nor the reason explain. Incomprehensibility has an enormous power over us in illness, more legitimately perhaps than the upright will allow. In health meaning has encroached upon sound. Our intelligence domineers over our senses. But in illness, with the police off duty, we creep beneath some obscure poem by Mallarmé or Donne, some phrase in Latin or Greek, and the words give out their scent, and ripple like leaves, and chequer us with light and shadow, and then, if at last we grasp the meaning, it is all the richer for having travelled slowly up with all the bloom upon its wings. Foreigners, to whom the tongue is strange, have

us at a disadvantage. The Chinese must know better the sound of *Antony and Cleopatra* than we do.

Rashness is one of the properties of illness—outlaws, that we are—and it is rashness that we chiefly need in reading Shakespeare. It is not that we should doff the intelligence in reading him, but that fully conscious and aware his fame intimidates us, and all the books of all the critics dull in us that thunder clap of conviction that nothing stands between us and him, which, if an illusion, is still so helpful an illusion, so prodigious a pleasure, so keen a stimulus in reading the great. Shakespeare is getting flyblown; a paternal government might well forbid writing about him, as they put his monument at Stratford beyond the reach of scribbling pencils. With all this buzz of criticism about, one may hazard one's conjectures privately, makes one's notes in the margin; but knowing that someone has said it before, or said it better, the zest is gone. Illness in its kingly sublimity sweeps all that aside, leaves nothing but Shakespeare and oneself, and what with his overweening power, our overweening arrogance, the barriers go down, the knots run smooth, the brain rings and resounds with *Lear* or *Macbeth*, and even Coleridge himself squeaks like a distant mouse. Of all the plays and even of the sonnets this is true; it is *Hamlet* that is the exception. *Hamlet* one reads once only in one's life, between the ages of twenty and twenty-five. Then one is Hamlet, one is youth; as, to make a clean breast of it, Hamlet is Shakespeare, is youth. And how can one explain what one is? One can but be it. Thus forced always to look back or sidelong at his own past the critic sees something moving and vanishing in *Hamlet*, as in a glass one sees the reflection of oneself, and it is this which, while it gives an everlasting variety to the play, forbids us to feel, as with *Lear* or *Macbeth*, that the centre is solid and holds firm whatever our successive readings lay upon it.

But enough of Shakespeare—let us turn to Augustus Hare. There are people who say that even illness does not warrant these transitions; that the author of *The Story of Two Noble Lives* is not the peer of Boswell; and if we assert that short of the best in literature we like the worst—it is mediocrity that is hateful—will have none of that either. So be it. The law is on the side of the normal. But for those who suffer a slight rise of temperature the names of Hare and Waterford and Canning will always ray out beams of benignant lustre. Not, it is true, for the first hundred pages or so. There, as so often in these fat volumes, we flounder, and threaten to sink in a plethora of aunts and uncles. We have to remind ourselves that there is such a thing as atmosphere; that the masters themselves often keep us waiting intolerably while they prepare our minds for whatever it may be—the surprise, or the lack of surprise. So Hare, too, takes his time; the charm steals upon us imperceptibly; by degrees we become almost one of the family, yet not quite for our sense of the oddity of it all remains, and share the family dismay when Lord Stuart leaves the room—there was a ball going forward—and is next heard of in Iceland. Parties, he said, bored him—such were English aristocrats before marriage with intellect had adulterated the fine singularity of their minds. Parties bore them; they are off to Iceland. Then Beckford's mania for castle building attacked him; and he must lift a French *château* across the channel, and erect pinnacles and towers to serve as servants' bedrooms at vast expense, upon the borders of a crumbling cliff, too, so that the housemaids saw their brooms swimming down the Solent, and Lady Stuart was much distressed, but made the best of it and began, like the high-born lady that she was, planting evergreens in the face of ruin; while the daughters, Charlotte and Louisa, grew up in their incomparable loveliness, with pencils in their hands, for ever sketching,

dancing, flirting, in a cloud of gauze. They are not very distinct it is true. For life then was not the life of Charlotte and Louisa. It was the life of families, of groups. It was a web, a net, spreading wide and enmeshing every sort of cousin and dependant, and old retainer. Aunts—Aunt Caledon, Aunt Mexborough—grandmothers—Granny Stuart, Granny Hardwicke—cluster in a kind of chorus, and rejoice and sorrow and eat Christmas dinner together, and grow very old and remain very upright, and sit in hooded chairs cutting flowers, it seems, out of coloured paper. Charlotte married Canning and went to India; Louisa married Lord Waterford and went to Ireland. Then the letters cross vast spaces in slow sailing ships and everything becomes still more protracted and verbose, and there seems no end to the space and the leisure of those early nineteenth century days, and faiths are lost and the life of Hedley Vicars revives them; aunts catch cold but recover; cousins marry; there is the Irish famine and the Indian Mutiny, and both sisters remain, to their great, but silent grief, for in those days there were things that women hid like pearls in their breasts, without children to come after them. Louisa, dumped down in Ireland with Lord Waterford at the hunt all day, was often very lonely; but she stuck to her post, visited the poor, spoke words of comfort ('I am sorry indeed to hear of Anthony Thompson's loss of mind, or rather of memory; if, however, he can understand sufficiently to trust solely in our Saviour, he has enough') and sketched and sketched. Thousands of notebooks were filled with pen and ink drawings of an evening, and then the carpenter stretched sheets for her and she designed frescoes for schoolrooms, had live sheep into her bedroom, draped gamekeepers in blankets, painted Holy Families in abundance, until the great Watts exclaimed that here was Titian's peer and Raphael's master! At that Lady Waterford laughed (she had a generous, benignant sense

of humour); and said that she was nothing but a sketcher; had scarcely had a lesson in her life—witness her angel's wings, scandalously unfinished. Moreover, there was her father's house for ever falling into the sea; she must shore it up; must entertain her friends; must fill her days with all sorts of charities, till her Lord came home from hunting, and then, at midnight often, she would sketch him with his knightly face half hidden in a bowl of soup, sitting with her notebook under a lamp beside him. Off he would ride again, stately as a crusader, to hunt the fox, and she would wave to him and think, each time, what if this should be the last? And so it was one morning. His horse stumbled. He was killed. She knew it before they told her, and never could Sir John Leslie forget, when he ran downstairs the day they buried him, the beauty of the great lady standing by the window to see the hearse depart, nor, when he came back again, how the curtain, heavy, Mid-Victorian, plush perhaps, was all crushed together where she had grasped it in her agony.

# THE RIVER FLOWS

By JOHN GOULD FLETCHER

EMERGING with the daybreak,  
Drifting in silence down a sluggish river,  
Between two banks dividing  
Which held the summer between them firm forever,  
I saw the cottonwoods  
Receding southwards,  
The arms of the cypress  
Touch the horizon,  
The great white pelicans  
Far away, beating and fluttering their outstretched wings.  
At Cairo, the ranks of the corn stood up like a plumed  
immortal army,  
We drifted on in a sunset of rosy heat.  
There was a flatboat hanging alongside laden with green  
melons,  
A passion-flower vine upon a whitewashed wall.  
At St. Louis we waited all morning with the roar of the  
trucks cutting across the cobbles,  
The river swirling through the great arches of the bridge  
above us,  
The mules flicking their ears against the flies.  
Vicksburg of yellow bluffs, Natchez of tumbling houses—  
The low banks we felt for in the darkness.  
At New Orleans we tied to the levee in the quiet of  
early morning,  
We wakened to see the city washed clean by colorless  
daylight;  
City once seen in midwinter glory, now drowsing in torrid  
silence.



Faint scent of patchouli hung above it,  
Of flowered silk and waxwhite prayers.

And the river took me—

The river which flowed through my dreams and which  
goes on still through my heart,

The masculine yellow Mississippi that the railroads had  
made forgotten,

The river of Spanish explorers, of canebrakes and floods,  
the pathway of strife that cut through the heart of my  
south.

I saw it once—I see it now forever.

For, with the next spring,

It was time to go.

Back to gray Europe

Shivering under the dark cloud that hung greedily poised  
above it.

Manhattan, opulent and daring, faded—

The broad-shaded southern town that I loved went out of  
existence—

The deep jade of the redwoods about San Francisco, the  
glowing fire of their trunks, disappeared from life,

The stony hillsides of New England, their sparse white  
farmhouses, followed—

The hard gray streets of Chicago running relentlessly  
forward into the wild blue lake,

These could not keep me back.

There dropped on them all the calm of a green-wooded  
harbour,

Terraced streets and belfry by the shore,

Skeleton clippers standing at attention

Amid a world at war.

# THE MONOCLE

*By* ALDOUS HUXLEY

THE drawing-room was on the first floor. The indistinct, inarticulate noise of many voices floated down the stairs, like the roaring of a distant train. Gregory took off his great-coat and handed it to the parlour-maid.

‘Don’t trouble to show me up,’ he said. ‘I know the way.’

Always so considerate! And yet, for some reason, servants would never do anything for him; they despised and disliked him.

‘Don’t bother,’ he insisted.

The parlour-maid, who was young, with high colours and yellow hair, looked at him, he thought, with silent contempt and walked away. In all probability, he reflected, she had never meant to show him up. He felt humiliated—yet once more.

A mirror hung at the bottom of the stairs. He peered at his image, gave his hair a pat, his tie a straightening touch. His face was smooth and egg-shaped; he had regular features, pale hair and a very small mouth, with cupid’s bow effects in the upper lip. A curate’s face. Secretly, he thought himself handsome and was always astonished that more people were not of his opinion.

Gregory mounted the stairs, polishing his monocle as he went. The volume of sound increased. At the landing, where the staircase turned, he could see the open door of the drawing-room. At first he could see only the upper quarter of the tall doorway and, through it, a patch of ceiling; but with every step he saw more, a strip of wall below the cornice, a picture, the heads of people, their whole bodies, their legs and feet. At the penultimate step,

he inserted his monocle and replaced his handkerchief in his pocket. Squaring his shoulders, he marched in—almost militarily, he flattered himself. His hostess was standing near the window, at the other side of the room. He advanced towards her, already, though she had not yet seen him, mechanically smiling his greetings. The room was crowded, hot, and misty with cigarette smoke. The noise was almost palpable; Gregory felt as though he were pushing his way laboriously through some denser element. Neck-deep, he waded through noise, still holding preciously above the flood his smile. He presented it, intact, to his hostess.

‘Good evening, Hermione.’

‘Ah, Gregory. How delightful! Good evening.’

‘I adore your dress,’ said Gregory, conscientiously following the advice of the enviably successful friend who had told him that one should never neglect to pay a compliment, however manifestly insincere. It wasn’t a bad dress, for that matter. But, of course, poor dear Hermione contrived to ruin anything she put on. She was quite malignantly ungraceful and ugly—on purpose, it always seemed to Gregory. ‘Too lovely,’ he cooed in his rather high voice.

Hermione smiled with pleasure. ‘I’m so glad,’ she began. But before she could get any further, a loud voice, nasally chanting, interrupted her.

‘Behold the monster Polypheme, behold the monster Polypheme,’ it quoted, musically, from *Acis and Galatea*.

Gregory flushed. A large hand slapped him in the middle of the back, below the shoulder blades. His body emitted the drum-like thud of a patted retriever.

‘Well, Polypheme;’ the voice had ceased to sing and was conversational, ‘well, Polypheme, how are you?’

‘Very well, thanks,’ Gregory replied, without looking round. It was that drunken South African brute, Paxton.

‘Very well, thanks, Silenus,’ he added.

Paxton had called him Polypheme because of his monocle: Polypheme, the one-eyed, wheel-eyed Cyclops. Tit for mythological tat. In future, he would always call Paxton Silenus.

'Bravo!' shouted Paxton. Gregory winced and gasped under a second, heartier slap. 'Pretty high class, this party. Eh, Hermione? Pretty cultured, what? It isn't every day that a hostess can hear her guests shooting Greco-Roman witticisms at one another. I congratulate you, Hermione.' He put his arm round her waist. 'I congratulate you on us.'

Hermione disengaged herself. 'Don't be a bore, Paxton,' she said impatiently.

Paxton laughed theatrically. 'Ha, ha!' A villain's laugh on the melodrama stage. And it was not his laughter only that was theatrical; his whole person parodied the old-time tragedian. The steep aquiline profile, the deeply sunken eyes, the black hair worn rather long—they were characteristic. 'A thousand apologies;' he spoke with an ironical courtesy. 'The poor colonial forgets himself. Boozy and ill-mannered boor!'

'Idiot!' said Hermione, and moved away.

Gregory made a movement to follow her; but Paxton caught him by the sleeve. 'Tell me,' he enquired earnestly, 'why *do* you wear a monocle, Polypheme?'

'Well, if you really want to know,' Gregory answered stiffly, 'for the simple reason that I happen to be short-sighted and astigmatic in the left eye and not in the right.'

'Short sighted and astigmatic?' the other repeated in tones of affected astonishment. 'Short sighted and astigmatic? God forgive me—and I thought it was because you wanted to look like a duke on the musical comedy stage.'

Gregory's laugh was meant to be one of frankly amazed amusement. That anyone should have imagined such a

thing! Incredible, comical! But a note of embarrassment and discomfort sounded through the amusement. For in reality, of course, Paxton was so devilishly nearly right. Conscious, only too acutely, of his nullity, his provincialism, his lack of successful arrogance, he had made the oculist's diagnosis an excuse for trying to look smarter, more insolent and impressive. In vain. His eyeglass had done nothing to increase his self-confidence. He was never at ease when he wore it. Monocle wearers, he decided, are like poets: born, not made. Cambridge had not eradicated the midland grammar-school boy. Cultured, with literary leanings, he was always aware of being the wealthy boot manufacturer's heir. He could not get used to his monocle. Most of the time, in spite of the oculist's recommendations, it dangled at the end of its string, a pendulum when he walked, and involving itself messily when he ate, in soup and tea, in marmalade and the butter. It was only occasionally, in specially favourable circumstances, that Gregory adjusted it to his eye; more rarely still that he kept it, once adjusted, more than a few minutes, a few seconds even, without raising his eyebrow and letting it fall again. And how seldom circumstances *were* favourable to Gregory's eyeglass! Sometimes his environment was too sordid for it, sometimes too smart. To wear a monocle in the presence of the poor, the miserable, the alphabetic is too triumphantly pointed a comment on their lot. Moreover, the poor and the alphabetic have a most deplorable habit of laughing derisively at such symbols of superior caste. Gregory was not laughter-proof; he lacked the lordly confidence and unawareness of nature's monocle-wearers. He did not know how to ignore the poor, to treat them if it were absolutely necessary to have dealings with them, as machines or domestic animals. He had seen too much of them in the days when his father was alive and had compelled him to take a practical interest in the business. It was the same lack of confidence that made him almost as

chary of fixing his eyeglass in the presence of the rich. With them, he never felt quite sure that he had a right to his monocle. He felt himself a parvenu to monocularity. And then there were the intelligent. Their company, too, was most unfavourable to the eyeglass. Eyeglassed, how could one talk of serious things? 'Mozart,' you might say, for example; 'Mozart is so pure, so spiritually beautiful.' It was unthinkable to speak those words with a disk of crystal screwed into your left eye-socket. No, the environment was only too rarely favourable. Still, benignant circumstances did sometimes present themselves. Hermione's half-Bohemian parties, for example. But he had reckoned without Paxton.

Amused, amazed, he laughed. As though by accident, the monocle dropped from his eye.

'Oh, put it back,' cried Paxton, 'put it back, I implore you,' and himself caught the glass, where it dangled over Gregory's stomach, and tried to replace it.

Gregory stepped back; with one hand he pushed away his persecutor, with the other he tried to snatch the monocle from between his fingers. Paxton would not let it go.

'I implore you,' Paxton kept repeating.

'Give it me at once,' said Gregory, furiously, but in a low voice, so that people should not look round and see the grotesque cause of the quarrel. He had never been so outrageously made a fool of.

Paxton gave it him at last. 'Forgive me,' he said, with mock penitence. 'Forgive a poor drunken colonial who doesn't know what's done in the best society and what isn't. You must remember I'm only a boozier, just a poor hard working drunkard. You know those registration forms they give you in French hotels? Name, date, of birth and so on. You know?'

Gregory nodded, with dignity.

'Well, when it comes to profession, I always write

"ivrogne". That is when I'm sober enough to remember the French word. If I'm too far gone, I just put "drunkard". They all know English, nowadays.'

'Oh,' said Gregory coldly.

'It's a capital profession,' Paxton confided. 'It permits you to do whatever you like—any damned thing that comes into your head. Throw your arms round any woman you fancy, tell her the most gross and fantastic impertinences, insult the men, laugh in people's faces—everything's permitted to the poor drunkard, particularly if he's only a poor colonial and doesn't know any better. *Verb sap*. Take the hint from me, old boy. Drop the monocle. It's no damned good. Be a boozier; you'll have much more fun. Which reminds me that I must go and find some more drink at all costs. I'm getting sober.'

He disappeared into the crowd. Relieved, Gregory looked round in search of familiar faces. As he looked, he polished his monocle, took the opportunity to wipe his forehead, then put the glass to his eye.

'Excuse me.' He oozed his way insinuatingly between the close set chairs, passed like a slug ('Excuse me'), between the all but contiguous backs of two standing groups. 'Excuse me.' He had seen acquaintances over there, by the fireplace: Ransom and Mary Haig and Miss Camperdown. He joined in their conversation; they were talking about Mrs. Mandragore.

All the old familiar stories about that famous lion huntress were being repeated. He himself repeated two or three, with suitable pantomime, perfected by a hundred tellings. In the middle of a grimace, at the top of an elaborate gesture, he suddenly saw himself grimacing, gesticulating, he suddenly heard the cadences of his voice repeating, by heart, the old phrases. Why does one come to parties, why on earth? Always the same boring people, the same dull scandal and one's own same parlour tricks. Each time. But he smirked, he mimed, he fluted and bellowed his

story through to the end. His auditors even laughed; it was a success. But Gregory felt ashamed of himself. Ransom began telling the story of Mrs. Mandragore and the Maharajah of Pataliapur. He groaned in the spirit. Why? he asked himself, why, why, why? Behind him, they were talking politics. Still pretending to smile at the Mandragore fable, he listened.

'It's the beginning of the end,' the politician was saying, prophesying destructions in a loud and cheerful voice.

'“Dear Maharajah,”’ Ransom imitated the Mandragore's intense voice, her aimed and yearning gestures, “if you knew how I *adore* the East.”’

'Our unique position was due to the fact that we started the industrial system before anyone else. Now, when the rest of the world has followed our example, we find it's a disadvantage to have started first. All our equipment is old-fash . . .'

'Gregory,' called Mary Haig, 'what's your story about the Unknown Soldier?'

'Unknown Soldier?' said Gregory vaguely, trying to catch what was being said behind him.

'The latest arrivals have the latest machinery. It's obvious. We . . .'

'You know the one. The Mandragore's party; you know.'

'Oh, when she asked us all to tea to meet the Mother of the Unknown Soldier.'

' . . . like Italy,' the politician was saying in his loud jolly voice. 'In future, we shall always have one or two millions more population than we can employ. Living on the state.'

One or two millions. He thought of the Derby. Perhaps there might be a hundred thousand in that crowd. Ten Derbies, twenty Derbies, all half starved, walking through the streets with brass bands and banners. He let his



monocle fall. Must send five pounds to the London Hospital, he thought. Four thousand eight hundred a year. Thirteen pounds a day. Less taxes, of course. Taxes were terrible. Monstrous, sir, monstrous. He tried to feel as indignant about taxes as those old gentlemen who get red in the face when they talk about them. But somehow, he couldn't manage to do it. And after all, taxes were no excuse, no justification. He felt all at once profoundly depressed. Still, he tried to comfort himself, not more than twenty or twenty-five out of the two million could live on his income. Twenty-five out of two millions—it was absurd, derisory! But he was not consoled.

'And the odd thing is, Ransom was still talking about the Mandragore, she isn't really in the least interested in her lions. She'll begin telling you about what Anatole France said to her and then forget in the middle, out of pure boredom, what she's talking about.'

Oh, God, God, thought Gregory. How often had he heard Ransom making the same reflections on the Mandragore's psychology! How often! He'd be bringing out that bit about the chimpanzees in half a moment. God help us!

'Have you ever watched the chimpanzees at the Zoo?' said Ransom. 'The way they pick up a straw or a banana skin and examine it for a few seconds with a passionate attention.' He went through a simian pantomime. 'Then suddenly, get utterly bored, let the thing drop from their fingers and look round vaguely in search of something else. They always remind me of the Mandragore and her guests. The way she begins, earnestly, as though you were the only person in the world; then all at once . . .'

Gregory could bear it no longer. He mumbled something to Miss Camperdown about having seen somebody he must talk to and disappeared, 'Excuse me,' slug-like, through the crowd. Oh, the misery, the appalling gloom

of it all! In a corner, he found young Crane and two or three other men with tumblers in their hands.

'Ah, Crane,' he said, 'for God's sake tell me where you got that drink.'

That golden fluid—it seemed the only hope. Crane pointed in the direction of the archway leading into the back drawing-room. He raised his glass without speaking, drank and winked at Gregory over the top of it. He had a face that looked like an accident. Gregory oozed on through the crowd, 'Excuse me,' he said aloud; but inwardly he was saying, 'God help us.'

At the further end of the back drawing-room was a table with bottles and glasses. The professional drunkard was sitting on a sofa near by, glass in hand, making personal remarks to himself about all the people who came within earshot.

'Christ!' he was saying, as Gregory came up to the table. 'Christ! Look at that!' *That* was the gaunt Mrs. Labadie in cloth of gold and pearls. 'Christ!' She had pounced on a shy young man entrenched behind the table.

'Tell me, Mr. Foley,' she began, approaching her horse-like face very close to that of the young man, and speaking appealingly, 'you who know *all* about mathematics, tell me . . .'

'Is it possible?' exclaimed the professional drunkard. 'In England's green and pleasant land? Ha, ha, ha!' He laughed his melodramatic laugh.

Pretentious fool, thought Gregory. How romantic he thinks himself! The laughing philosopher, what? Drunk because the world isn't good enough for him. Quite the little Faust.

'And Polypheme too,' Paxton soliloquised on, 'funny little Polypheme!' He laughed again. 'The heir to all the ages. Christ!'

With dignity, Gregory poured himself out some whisky and filled up the glass from the siphon—with dignity,

with conscious grace and precision, as though he were acting the part of a man who helps himself to whisky and soda, on the stage. He took a sip; then elaborately acted the part of one who takes out his handkerchief and blows his nose.

'Don't they make one believe in birth control, all these people,' continued the professional drunkard. 'If only their parents could have had a few intimate words with Stopes! Heigh ho.' He uttered a stylized, Shakespearean sigh.

Buffoon, thought Gregory. And the worst is that if one called him one, he'd pretend that he'd said so himself, all the time. And so he has, of course, just to be on the safe side. But in reality, it's obvious, the man thinks of himself as a sort of Musset or up to date Byron. A beautiful soul, darkened and embittered by experience. Ugh!

Still pretending to be unaware of the professional boozer's proximity, Gregory went through the actions of the man who sips.

'How *clear* you make it!' Mrs. Labadie was saying, point blank, into the young mathematician's face. She smiled at him; the horse, thought Gregory, has a terribly human expression.

'Well,' said the young mathematician nervously, 'now we come on to Riemann.'

'Riemann!' Mrs. Labadie repeated, with a kind of ecstasy; 'Riemann!' as though the geometrician's soul were in his name.

Gregory wished that there were somebody to talk to, somebody who would relieve him of the necessity of acting the part of unaware indifference before the scrutinizing eyes of Paxton. He leaned against the wall in the attitude of one who falls, all of a sudden, into a brown study. Blankly and pensively, he stared at a point on the opposite wall, high up, just below the ceiling. People must be wondering, he reflected, what he was thinking about.

And what was he thinking about? Himself. Himself thinking. Vanity, vanity. Oh, the gloom, the misery of it all!

‘Polypheme!’

He pretended not to hear.

‘Polypheme!’ It was a shout this time.

Gregory slightly overacted the part of one who is suddenly aroused from profoundest meditation. He started; blinking, a little dazed, he turned his head.

‘Ah, Paxton,’ he said. ‘Silenus! I hadn’t noticed that you were there.’

‘Hadn’t you?’ said the professional drunkard. ‘That was damned clever of you. What were you thinking about so picturesquely there?’

‘Oh, nothing,’ said Gregory, smiling with the modest confusion of the Thinker, caught in the act.

‘Just what I imagined,’ said Paxton. ‘Nothing. Nothing at all. Jesus Christ,’ he added, for himself.

Gregory’s smile was rather sickly. He averted his face and passed once more into meditation. It seemed, in the circumstances, the best thing he could do. Dreamily, as though unconscious of what he was doing, he emptied his glass.

‘Crippen!’ he heard the professional drunkard muttering. ‘It’s like a funeral. Joyless, Joyless.’

‘Well, Gregory.’

Gregory did another of his graceful starts, his dazed blinkings. He had been afraid, for a moment, that Spiller was going to respect his meditation and not speak to him. That would have been very embarrassing.

‘Spiller!’ he exclaimed with delight and astonishment. ‘My dear chap.’ He shook him heartily by the hand.

Square-faced, with a wide mouth and an immense forehead, framed in copious and curly hair, Spiller looked like a Victorian celebrity. His friends declared that he

might actually have been a Georgian celebrity, but for the fact that he preferred talking to writing.

'Just up for the day,' explained Spiller. 'I couldn't stand another hour of the bloody country. Working all day. No company but my own. I find I bore myself to death.' He helped himself to whisky.

'Jesus! The great man! Ha, ha!' The professional drunkard covered his face with his hands and shuddered violently.

'Do you mean to say you came specially for this?' asked Gregory, waving his hand to indicate the party at large.

'Not specially. Incidentally. I heard that Hermione was giving a party, so I dropped in.'

'Why *does* one go to parties?' said Gregory, unconsciously assuming something of the embittered Byronic manner of the professional drunkard.

'To satisfy the cravings of the herd instinct,' Spiller replied to the rhetorical question without hesitation and with a pontifical air of infallibility. 'Just as one pursues women to satisfy the cravings of the reproductive instinct.' Spiller had an impressive way of making everything he said sound very scientific; it all seemed to come straight from the horse's mouth, so to speak. Vague-minded Gregory found him most stimulating.

'You mean, one goes to parties just in order to be in a crowd?'

'Precisely,' Spiller replied. 'Just to feel the warmth of the herd around one and sniff the smell of one's fellow humans.' He snuffed the thick hot air.

'I suppose you must be right,' said Gregory. 'It's certainly very hard to think of any other reason.'

He looked round the room, as though searching for other reasons. And surprisingly, he found one: Molly Voles. He had not seen her before; she must have only just arrived.

'I've got a capital idea for a new paper,' began Spiller.

'Have you?' Gregory did not show much curiosity. How beautiful her neck was, and those thin arms!

'Art, literature and science,' Spiller continued. 'The idea's a really modern one. It's to bring science into touch with the arts and so into touch with life. Life, art, science—all three would gain. You see the notion?'

'Yes,' said Gregory, 'I see.' He was looking at Molly, hoping to catch her eye. He caught it at last, that cool and steady grey eye. She smiled and nodded.

'You like the idea?' asked Spiller.

'I think it's splendid,' answered Gregory with a sudden warmth that astonished his interlocutor.

Spiller's large severe face shone with pleasure. 'Oh, I'm glad,' he said, 'I'm very glad indeed that you like it so much.'

'I think it's splendid,' said Gregory extravagantly. 'Simply splendid.' She had seemed really glad to see him, he thought.

'I was thinking,' Spiller pursued, with a rather elaborate casualness of manner, 'I was thinking you might like to help me start the thing. One could float it comfortably with a thousand pounds of capital.'

The enthusiasm faded out of Gregory's face; it became blank in its clerical roundness. He shook his head. 'If I had a thousand pounds,' he said regretfully. Damn the man, he was thinking. Setting me a trap like that.

'If,' repeated Spiller. 'But my dear fellow!' He laughed. 'And besides, it's a safe six per cent investment. I can collect an extraordinarily strong set of contributors, you know.'

Gregory shook his head once more. 'Alas,' he said, 'alas.'

'And what's more,' insisted Spiller, 'you'd be a benefactor of society.'

'Impossible.' Gregory was firm; he planted his feet

like a donkey and would not be moved. Money was the one thing he never had a difficulty in being firm about.

'But come,' said Spiller, 'come. What's a thousand pounds to a millionaire like you? You've got—how much *have* you got?'

Gregory stared him glassily in the eyes. 'Twelve hundred a year,' he said. 'Say fourteen hundred. 'He could see that Spiller didn't believe him. Damn the man.' Not that he really expected him to believe; but still . . . 'And then there are one's taxes,' he added plaintively, 'and one's contributions to charities.' He remembered that fiver he was going to send to the London Hospital. 'The London Hospital, for example—always short of money.' He shook his head sadly. 'Quite impossible, I'm afraid.' He thought of all the unemployed; ten Derby crowds, half starved, with banners and brass bands. He felt himself blushing. Damn the man! He was furious with Spiller.

Two voices sounded simultaneously in his ears: the professional drunkard's and another, a woman's—Molly's.

'The succubus!' groaned the professional drunkard. '*Il ne manquait que ça!*'

'Impossible?' said Molly's voice, unexpectedly repeating his latest word. 'What's impossible.'

'Well,' said Gregory, embarrassed, and hesitated.

It was Spiller who explained.

'Why, of course Gregory can put up a thousand pounds,' said Molly, when she had learned what was the subject at issue. She looked at him indignantly, contemptuously, as though reproaching him for his avarice.

'You know better than I, then,' said Gregory, trying to take the airy jocular line about the matter. He remembered what the enviably successful friend had told him about compliments. 'How lovely you look in that white dress, Molly,' he added and tempered the jocularly of his smile with a glance that was meant to be at once insolent

and tender. 'Too lovely,' he repeated and put up his monocle to look at her.

'Thank you,' she said, looking back at him unwaveringly. Her eyes were calm and bright. Against that firm and penetrating regard his jocularly, his attempt at insolent tenderness punctured and crumpled up. He averted his eyes, he let fall his eyeglass. It was a weapon he did not dare or know how to use—it made him look ridiculous. He was like horse-faced Mrs. Labadie flirting coquettishly with her fan. *011 ms 6, 1422 k7.4*

'I'd like to discuss the question in any case,' he said to Spiller, glad of any excuse to escape from those eyes. 'But I assure you I really can't. . . . Not the whole thousand, at any rate,' he added, feeling despairingly that he had been forced against his will to surrender.

'Molly!' shouted the professional drunkard.

Obediently she went and sat down beside him on the sofa. *74159*

'Well, Tom,' she said and laid her hand on his knee. 'How are you?'

'As I always am, when you're anywhere about,' answered the professional drunkard tragically: 'insane.' He put his arm round her shoulders and leaned towards her. 'Utterly insane.'

'I'd rather we didn't sit like this, you know.' She smiled at him; they looked at one another closely. Then Paxton withdrew his arm and leaned back in his corner of the sofa.

Looking at them, Gregory was suddenly convinced that they were lovers. We needs must love the lowest when we see it. All Molly's lovers were like that: ruffians.

He turned to Spiller. 'Shouldn't we go back to my rooms?' he suggested, interrupting him in the midst of a long explanatory discourse about the projected paper. 'It'll be quieter there and less stuffy.' Molly and Paxton, Molly and that drunken brute. Was it possible? It was



certain; he had no doubts. 'Let's get out of this beastly place quickly,' he added.

'All right,' Spiller agreed. 'One last lashing of whisky to support us on the way.' He reached for the bottle.

Gregory drank nearly half a tumbler, undiluted. A few yards down the street, he realized that he was rather tipsy.

'I think I must have a very feebly developed herd instinct,' he said. 'How I hate these crowds!' Molly and Silenus-Paxton! He imagined their loves. And he had thought that she had been glad to see him, when first he caught her eye.

They emerged into Bedford Square. The gardens were as darkly mysterious as a piece of country woodland. Woodland without, whisky within combined to make Gregory's melancholy vocal. *Che farò senz' Euridice?* he softly sang.

'You can do without her very well,' said Spiller replying to the quotation. 'That's the swindle and stupidity of love. Each time you feel convinced that it's something immensely significant and everlasting: you feel infinitely. Each time. Three weeks later, you're beginning to find her boring; or somebody else rolls the eye and the infinite emotions are transferred and you're off on another eternal week-end. It's a sort of practical joke. Very stupid and disagreeable. But then nature's humour isn't ours.'

'You think it's a joke, that infinite feeling?' asked Gregory indignantly. 'I don't. I believe that it represents something real, outside ourselves, something in the structure of the universe.'

'A different universe with every mistress, eh?'

'But if it occurs only once in a life-time?' asked Gregory in a maudlin voice. He longed to tell his companion how unhappy he felt about Molly, how much unhappier than anybody had ever felt before.

'It doesn't,' said Spiller.

‘But if I say it does?’ Gregory hiccoughed.

‘That’s only due to lack of opportunities,’ Spiller replied in his most decisively scientific, *ex cathedra* manner.

‘I don’t agree with you,’ was all that Gregory could say, feebly. He decided not to mention his unhappiness. Spiller might not be a sympathetic listener. Coarse old devil!

‘Personally,’ Spiller continued, ‘I’ve long ago ceased trying to make sense of it. I just accept these infinite emotions for what they are—very stimulating and exciting while they last—and don’t attempt to rationalize or explain them. It’s the only sane and scientific way of treating the facts.’

There was a silence. They had emerged into the brilliance of the Tottenham Court Road. The polished roadway reflected the arc lamps. The entrance to the cinema palaces were caverns of glaring yellow light. A pair of buses roared past.

‘They’re dangerous, those infinite emotions,’ Spiller went on, ‘very dangerous. I once came within an inch of getting married on the strength of one of them. It began on a steamer. You know what steamers are. The extraordinary aphrodisiac effects sea voyaging has on people who aren’t used to it, especially women! They really ought to be studied by some competent physiologist. Of course, it may be simply the result of idleness, high feeding and constant proximity—though I doubt if you’d get the same results in similar circumstances on land. Perhaps the total change of environment, from earth to water, undermines the usual terrestrial prejudices. Perhaps the very shortness of the voyage helps—the sense that it’s so soon coming to an end that rose-buds must be gathered and hay made while the sun shines. Who knows?’ He shrugged his shoulders. ‘But in any case, it’s most extraordinary. Well, it began, as I say, on a steamer.’

Gregory listened. A few minutes since the trees of

Bedford Square had waved in the darkness of his boozily maudlin soul. The lights, the noise, the movement of the Tottenham Court Road were now behind his eyes as well as before them. He listened, grinning. The story lasted well into the Charing Cross Road.

By the time it had come to an end, Gregory was feeling in an entirely jolly and jaunty mood. He had associated himself with Spiller; Spiller's adventures were his. He guffawed with laughter, he readjusted his monocle which had been dangling all this time at the end of its string, which had been tinkling at every step against the buttons of his waistcoat. (A broken heart, it must be obvious to anyone who has the slightest sensibility, cannot possibly wear an eyeglass.) He, too, was a bit of a dog, now. He hiccupped; a certain suspicion of queasiness tempered his jollity, but it was no more than the faintest suspicion. Yes, yes; he too knew all about life on steamers, even though the longest of his sea voyages had only been from Newhaven to Dieppe.

When they reached Cambridge Circus, the theatres were just disgorging their audiences. The pavements were crowded; the air was full of noise and the perfume of women. Overhead, the sky-signs winced and twitched. The theatre vestibules brightly glared. It was an unaristocratic and vulgar luxury, to which Gregory had no difficulty in feeling himself superior. Through his Cyclopean monocle, he gazed enquiringly at every woman they passed. He felt wonderfully reckless (the queasiness was the merest suspicion of an unpleasant sensation), wonderfully jolly and—yes, that was curious—large: larger than life. As for Molly Voles, he'd teach her.

'Lovely creature, that,' he said, indicating a cloak of pink silk and gold, a close-cropped golden head.

Spiller nodded, indifferently. 'About that paper of ours,' he said thoughtfully. 'I was thinking that we might start off with a series of articles on the metaphysical basis of

science, the reasons, historical and philosophical, that we have for assuming that scientific truth is true.'

'H'm,' said Gregory.

'And concurrently a series on the meaning and point of art. Start right from the beginning in both cases. Quite a good idea, don't you think?'

'Quite,' said Gregory. One of his monocular glances had been received with a smile of invitation; she was ugly, unfortunately, and obviously professional. Haughtily he glared past her, as though she were not there.

'But whether Tolstoy was right,' Spiller was meditatively saying, 'I never feel sure. Is it true, what he says, that the function of art is the conveyance of emotion? In part, I should say, but not exclusively, not exclusively.' He shook his large head.

'I seem to be getting tipsier,' said Gregory, more to himself than to his companion. He still walked correctly, but he was conscious, too conscious, of the fact. And the suspicion of queasiness was becoming well founded.

Spiller did not hear or, hearing, ignored the remark. 'For me,' he continued, 'the main function of art is to impart knowledge. The artist knows more than the rest of us. He is born knowing more about his soul than we know of ours, and more about the relations existing between his soul and the cosmos. He anticipates what will be common knowledge in a higher state of development. Most of our moderns are primitives compared to the most advanced of the dead.'

'Quite,' said Gregory, not listening. His thoughts were elsewhere, with his eyes.

'Moreover,' Spiller went on, 'he can say what he knows, and say it in such a way that our own rudimentary, incoherent, unrealized knowledge of what he talks about falls into a kind of pattern—like iron filings under the influence of the magnet.'

There were three of them—ravishingly, provocatively

young—standing in a group at the pavement's edge. They chattered, they stared with bright derisive eyes at the passers by, they commented in audible whispers, they burst into irrepressible shrill laughter as Spiller and Gregory approached, were spied by one of the three, who nudged her fellows.

'Oh, Lord!'

They giggled, they laughed aloud, they were contorted with mockery.

'Look at old Golliwog!' That was for Spiller, who walked bare-headed, his large grey hat in his hand.

'And the nut!' Another yell for the monocle.

'It's that magnetic power,' said Spiller, quite unaware of the lovely derision of which he was the object, 'that power of organizing mental chaos into a pattern, which makes a truth uttered poetically in art, more valuable than a truth uttered scientifically, in prose.'

Playfully reproving, Gregory wagged a finger at the mockers. There was a yet more piercing yell. The two men passed; smilingly Gregory looked back. He felt jauntier and jollier than ever; but the suspicion was ripening to a certainty.

'For instance,' said Spiller, 'I may know well enough that all men are mortal. But this knowledge is organized and given a form, it is even actually increased and deepened, when Shakespeare talks about all our yesterdays having lighted fools the way to dusty death.'

Gregory was trying to think of an excuse for giving his companion the slip and turning back to dally with the three. He would love them all, simultaneously.

*La touffé echevelée*

*De baisers que les dieux gardaient si bien mêlée.*

The Mallarméan phrase came back to him, imposing on his vague desires (old man Spiller was quite right, old imbecile!) the most elegant of forms. Spiller's words came to him as though from a great distance.

'And the *Coriolan* overture is a piece of new knowledge, as well as a composer of existing chaotic knowledge.'

He would suggest dropping in at the Monico, pretext a call of nature, slip out and never return. Old imbecile, maundering on like that! Not but what it mightn't have been quite interesting, at the right moment. But now . . . And he thought, no doubt, that he was going to tap him, Gregory, for a thousand pounds! Gregory could have laughed aloud. But his derision was tinged with an uneasy consciousness that his tipsiness had definitely taken a new and disquieting form.

'Some of Cézanne's landscapes,' he heard Spiller saying.

Suddenly, from a shadowed doorway a few yards down the street in front of them, there emerged, slowly, tremulously, a thing; a bundle of black tatters that moved on a pair of old squashed boots, that was topped by a broken, dog's-eared hat. It had a face, clay-coloured and emaciated. It had hands, in one of which it held a little tray with match-boxes. It opened its mouth, from which two or three of the discoloured teeth were missing; it sang, all but inaudibly. Gregory thought he recognized 'Nearer, my God, to Thee.' They approached.

'Certain frescoes of Giotto, certain early Greek sculptures,' Spiller went on with his interminable catalogue.

The thing looked at them, Gregory looked at the thing. Their eyes met. Gregory expanded his left eye-socket. The monocle dropped to the end of its silken tether. He felt in his right hand trouser pocket, the pocket where he kept his silver, for a sixpence, a shilling even. The pocket contained only four half-crowns. Half a crown? He hesitated, drew one of the coins half way to the surface, then let it fall again with a chink. He dipped his left hand into his other trouser pocket, he withdrew it, full. Into the proffered tray he dropped three pennies and a halfpenny.

'No, I don't want any matches,' he said.

Gratitude interrupted the hymn. Gregory had never felt so much ashamed in his life. His monocle tinkled against the buttons of his waistcoat. Deliberately, he placed one foot before the other, walking with correctness, but as though on a tightrope. Yet another insult to the thing. He wished to God he were sober. He wished to God he hadn't desired with such precision that 'dishevelled tuft of kisses.' Threepence-halfpenny! But he could still run back and give half a crown, two half crowns. He could still run back. Step by step, as though on the tightrope, he advanced, keeping step with Spiller. Four steps, five steps . . . eleven steps, twelve steps, thirteen steps. Oh, the unluckiness! Eighteen steps, nineteen. . . . Too late; it would be ridiculous to turn back now, it would be too conspicuously silly. Twenty-three, twenty-four steps. The suspicion was a certainty of queasiness, a growing certainty.

'At the same time,' Spiller was saying, 'I really don't see how the vast majority of scientific truths and hypotheses can ever become the subject of art. I don't see how they can be given poetic, emotive significance without losing their precision. How could you render the electro-magnetic theory of light, for example, in a moving literary form? It simply can't be done.'

'Oh, for God's sake,' shouted Gregory with a sudden outburst of fury, 'for God's sake, shut up! How can you go on talking and talking away like this?' He hiccupped again, more profoundly and menacingly than before.

'But why on earth not?' asked Spiller with a mild astonishment.

'Talking about art and science and poetry,' said Gregory tragically, almost with tears in his eyes, 'when there are two million people in England on the brink of starvation. Two million.' He meant the repetition to be impressive, but he hiccupped yet once more; he was feeling definitely rather sick. 'Living in stinking hovels,'

he went on, *decrecendo*, 'promiscuously, herded together, like animals. Worse than animals.'

They had halted; they confronted one another.

'How can you?' repeated Gregory, trying to reproduce the generous indignation of a moment since. But anticipations of nausea were creeping up from his stomach, like a miasma from a marsh, filling his mind, driving out from it every thought, every emotion except the horrid apprehension of being sick.

Spiller's large face suddenly lost its monumental, Victorian celebrity's appearance; it seemed to fall to pieces. The mouth opened, the eyes puckered up, the forehead broke into wrinkles and the deep lines running from either side of the nose to the corners of the mouth expanded and contracted wildly, like a pair of demented glove stretchers. An immense sound came out of him. His great body was shaken with gigantic laughter.

Patience—patience was all that was left him, patience and a fading hope—Gregory waited for the paroxysm to subside. He had made a fool of himself; he was being derided. But he was past caring.

Spiller so far recovered as to be able to speak. 'You're wonderful, my dear Gregory,' he said gasping. The tears stood in his eyes. 'Really superb.' He took him affectionately by the arm and still laughing, walked on. Gregory perforce walked too; he had no choice.

'If you don't mind,' he said after a few steps, 'I think we'll take a taxi.'

'What, to Jermyn Street?' said Spiller.

'I think, we'd better,' Gregory insisted.

Climbing into the vehicle, he managed to entangle his monocle in the handle of the door. The string snapped; the glass dropped on the floor of the cab. Spiller picked it up and returned it to him.

'Thank you,' said Gregory and put it out of harm's way into a waistcoat pocket.



# THE FIFTEENTH OF NOVEMBER

By GERTRUDE STEIN

ON the fifteenth of November we have been told that she will go either here or there and in company with some one who will attempt to be of aid in any difficulty that may be pronounced as at all likely to occur. This in case that as usual there has been no cessation of the manner in which latterly it has all been as it might be repetition. To deny twice. Once or twice.

On the fifteenth of November in place of what was undoubtedly a reason for finding and in this way the best was found to be white or black, and as the best was found out to be nearly as much so as was added. To be pleased with the result.

I think I was.

On the fifteenth of November have it a year. On the fifteenth of November they returned too sweet. On the fifteenth of November also.

The fifteenth of November at best has for its use more than enough to-day. It can also be mentioned that the sixteenth and any one can see furniture and further and further than that. The idea is that as for a very good reason anything can be chosen the choice is the choice is included.

After contradiction it is desirable.

In any accidental case no incident no repetition no darker thoughts can be united again. Again and again.

In plenty of cases in union there is strength.

Can any one in thinking of how presently it is as if it were in the midst of more attention can any one thinking of how to present it easily can any one really partake in saying so. Can any one.

All of it as eagerly as not.

Entirely a different thing. Entirely a different thing when all of it has been awfully well chosen and thoughtfully corrected.

He said we, and we.

We said he.

He said we.

We said he, and he.

He said.

We said.

We said it. As we said it.

We said that forty was the same as that which we had heard.

It depends entirely upon whether in that as finally sure, surely as much so.

Please please them. Please please please them.

Having heard half of it.

Please having having had please having had please having had half of it.

Please please half of it.

Plases.

Yes and a day.

A day and never having heard a thing.

Extra forty.

There is no greater pleasure than in having what is a great pleasure.

Happy to say that it was a mistake.

If at each part of one part and that is on the whole the best of all for what it provides and any satisfaction if at each part less less and more than usual it is not at all necessary that a little more has more added in a day. It is considerably augmented and further it settles it as well.

This makes mention more and more and mention to mention this makes it more and more necessary to mention that eighteen succeeds three. Can going again be startling.

On the fifteenth of November in increase and in in-

creases, it increases as it has been carefully considered. He has a son and a daughter and in this case it is important because although in itself a pleasure it can be a pleasure.

Fortunately replacing takes the place of their sending and fortunately as they are sending in this instance if three are there and one has returned and one is gone and one is going need there be overtaking. Overtaken. A usefulness to be.

Mentioned as a mistake. No mention not mentioned not mentioning not to be before and fortunately. It was very fortunate.

If calling had come from calling out. Come and call. Call it weekly.

In this case a description.

Forward and back weekly.

In this case absolutely a question in question.

Furnished as meaning supplied.

Further back as far back.

Considerably more.

Simply and simply and simply, simply simply there. Simply so that in that way, simply in that way simply so that simply so that in that way.

November the fifteenth and simply so that simply so that simply in that simply in that simply so that in that simply in that simply in that way simply so that simply so that in that way simply in that way, simply in that way so that simply so that simply so that simply simply in that, simply in that so that simply so that simply so that simply in that, so that simply in that way.

Actually the fifteenth of November.

Played and plays and says and access. Plays and played and access and impress. Played and plays and access and acquiesce and a mistake. Actually the fifteenth of November. Let us lose at least three. You too. Let us lose at least three. You two. Let us lose at least three. Three

and three makes made three and three made makes, three and three makes, fourteen is a few.

A few separated rather separated separately.

As readers make red as pallor and few as readers make red and so do you.

Very nearly actually and truly.

A bargain in much as much a bargain in as much as there is of it. Have had it in reserve. To have had it in reserve. And have had it in reserve. Or have had it in reserve. Or have had it in reserve. To have had it in reserve. Touch a tree touch a tree to it.

Irons make an iron here and there.

And do declare.

The fifteenth of November has happily a birthday. And very happily a birthday. And very happily a birthday. The fifteenth of November has, happily, a birthday and very happily a birthday, and very happily a birthday.

Not as yet and to ask a question and to ask a question and as yet, and as yet to as yet to ask a question to and as yet.

Not as yet and to ask a question and to ask a question and as not yet. As not yet and to as yet and to ask a question and to as yet and to wind as yet and to as yet and to ask a question and to as yet ask a question as not yet, as not yet and to ask as not yet, and as not yet to ask a question as yet, and to as yet to wind as not yet, as not yet to wind please wind as not yet to ask a question and to and not yet. Please wind the clock and as yet and as not yet. Please wind the clock and not yet, to please not yet as not yet.

He said enough.

Enough said.

He said enough.

Enough said.

Enough said.

He said enough.

He said enough.

Enough said.

He said enough.

Not only wool and woolen silk and silken not only silk and silken wool and woolen not only wool and woolen silk and silken not only silk and silken wool and woolen not only wool and woolen silk and silken not only silk and silken not only wool and woolen not only wool and woolen not only silk and silken not only silk and silken not only wool and woolen.

# MARLOWE'S HAND IN ' ARDEN OF FEVERSHAM '

## A PROBLEM FOR CRITICS

*By* E. H. C. OLIPHANT

THE fashions in methods for the determination of authorship in the field of Elizabethan drama have varied with the years. Purely æsthetic considerations gave way long ago to verse tests capable of tabulation. Such tests afforded proofs that, whether sound or not, were at least tangible. They served, and still serve, a good purpose; but the importance attached to them, to the exclusion of other considerations, was so excessive, and the deductions made were, in many cases, so unwarranted, that they went out of favour, and are now somewhat unreasonably ignored. They are sound tests; but care must be exercised in the use of them, and judgment in the determination of their value and bearing in specific cases. Their place, in the estimation of most students, has been taken by the parallel-passage test. It is worth while to consider whether or not the change is for the better.

This test labours under three very grave disadvantages. Firstly, if parallels between two plays are regarded as proving identity of authorship, it does not follow that the absence of such parallels should be taken as proof of diversity of authorship; yet a tendency in that direction is now and then observable. Secondly, the scholar who relies upon this test needs such a knowledge of the corpus of Elizabethan drama as, it is safe to say, no one possesses.

For lack of such knowledge, one constantly sees importance attached to parallels that are in reality of no importance whatever, and parallels overlooked that might point in quite another direction than that indicated by those to which our attention is invited. Thirdly, it is not always easy to decide precisely what the parallels prove. In some cases they are regarded as proving identity of authorship, and in other cases as disproving it; in some cases as implying self-repetition, and in others as indicating theft or imitation or borrowing—call it what you will—by another writer. This is a serious flaw, for it means that thus one can prove to one's own satisfaction anything one pleases. Hence it is that the pursuit of parallels is as apt to lead to the tying of new knots as to the untying of old ones.

The effect of concentrating on certain parallels and ignoring others is well illustrated by a consideration of the relation of the old *King Leir* to *Arden of Feversham*; and the difficulty of determining the interpretation to be placed upon echoes of one play in another may be seen in a comparison of the latter of these two plays with Marlowe's *Edward II*.

The settlement of the question of the authorship of *Arden* is perhaps the most important one to be achieved in the whole range of Elizabethan drama. Perhaps I should say that it *was* the most important, since it is widely held to have been solved by the employment of this fashionable test by Mr. Charles Crawford and Mr. H. Dugdale Sykes. They agree in declaring the tragedy to be the work of Kyd, and advance proofs that both in quantity and quality leave little to be desired by those who are willing to be convinced. But, even if it be granted that they have proved the presence of Kyd—and, for my own part, I am in entire agreement with them on that point—it is not the same thing as proving his entire responsibility for the play. To devote one's attention almost wholly to a single author,

for the discovery of echoes of his work, serves a very useful purpose, inasmuch as it affords a line as to his presence in the play under investigation; but the results obtained, though correct as far as they go, may fail in fulness and completeness. So it is in this case: Mr. Sykes, though one of the most careful, most competent, and most conscientious of all the scholars who rely upon this means of determining questions of authorship, has had his eye so fixedly set upon the one thing he was out to prove that he has missed similarities lying right under his nose. In the book (*Sidelights on Shakespeare*) which contains his article on *Arden of Feversham* is an examination of *Leir*. On the strength of parallels, he gives the one to Kyd, and the other to Peele, and apparently fails to notice that the one play echoes the other. There are, too, resemblances in *Leir* to *Soliman and Perseda*, which he gives to Kyd, and to *Edward II.*, Marlowe's authorship of which he does not question. Let me instance:

From Scene 1: Our quondam queen. *Arden*, V. 1: Thy quondam master.

To be enrolled in chronicles of fame / By never-dying perpetuity.  
*Soliman*, I. 1: To be enrolled in the brass-leaved book / Of never-wasting perpetuity. *Edward*, 4: In the chronicle enrol his name.

From Scene 3: Oh, how thy words revive my dying soul. *Edward*, 4: Oh, how a kiss revives poor Isabel.

I cannot paint my duty forth in words. *Arden*, II. 2: I cannot paint my valour out with words.

You were not best say. *Arden*, I.: You were best to say; IV.: You were not best to meddle. *Soliman*, II. 2: You had not best go.

From Scene 6: She'll lay her husband's benefice on her back. *Edward*, 4: He wears a lord's revenue on his back. (See also 2 *Henry VI.*, I. 3.)

The kindest girls in Christendom. *Arden*, IV. 4: The railingest knave in Christendom. *Soliman*, I. 2: The braginst knave in Christendom. 2 *Contention*, II. 1: The lyingest knave in Christendom. (Compare with these superlatives the 'parlousest' and 'perjuredst' of *Leir*.)

From Scene 12: I long till it be done (and another 'I long till it be' in Scene 2). *Edward*, 5: I long till I be there. (In all three cases the sentiment is expressed at the closing of the scene.)

From Scene 14: It ill befits that I should lean upon / The person of a king. *Edward*, 21: 'Tis not meet that one so false / Should come about the



person of a prince. *Soliman*, I. 1 : It is not meet that one so base as thou / Shouldst come about the person of a king.

From Scene 15 : The gainfullest trade in Christendom. See above.

From Scene 17 : Many friends I purchase. *Arden*, II. 2 : Purchase Mosbie for thy friend; V. 1 : His company hath purchased me ill friends. Your company hath purchased me ill friends. *Edward*, 4 : Purchase him such friends. *Soliman*, IV. 2 : My valour everywhere shall purchase friends.

From Scene 18 : Bear an honourable mind. *Arden*, II. 1 : Keep that same honourable mind.

From Scene 19 : For fear my feeble joints do quake. *Arden*, III. 1 : My trembling joints witness my inward fear; III. 3 : Trembled every joint. *Edward*, 26 : Every joint shakes.

From Scene 23 : Twenty thanks. *Arden*, I. : Twenty painters; V. 4 : Twenty warrants. *Soliman*, I. 1 : Twenty gracious things; / Twenty kind of ways. (In every case, the 'twenty' is used indefinitely.)

From Scene 24 : Sweet rest betide unto our happy souls. *Edward*, 21 : Even so betide my soul.

From Scene 25 : White-livered slaves. *Arden*, III. 2 : White-livered peasant. (In *Leir*, as in *Arden* and *Edward II.*, 'peasant' and 'slave' are the chief terms of abuse.)

From Scene 30 : Add fresh vigour to my weary limbs; Scene 14 : Fainting limbs. *Soliman*, I. 1 : Add fresh courage to my fainting limbs. *Arden*, III. 1 : Pouring fresh sorrow on his weary limbs.

More odious to my sight than is a toad. *Arden*, III. 6 : I hate thee as I hate a toad. *Soliman*, III. 2 : Hates me like a toad.

There are parallels also with other Marlowe plays, and the list might be further extended by the inclusion of such tropes as that of eagles gazing against the sun; but it may be worth while to direct attention to one or two minor points of vocabulary, for it is in such that an author may be held to give the surest indication of his identity. The heavy rant, the fine poetry, the splendid oratory, the cutting retort may be pirated, especially by an actor-author who has probably declaimed some of the lines or envied their success in the mouth of another, while the insignificant word, the unobtrusive phrase will escape notice. If these recur frequently, it is because they constitute a habit; and their occurrence, whatever it may be due to, is certainly not to be attributed to imitation. It

may be said that, the less significant a passage is dramatically or poetically or elocutionarily, the more significant it is for the purpose of ascertaining the responsibility for it. Mr. Sykes is therefore thoroughly justified in calling attention to Kyd's use of the word 'paltry' ('Kyd's adjective,' he calls it), his employment of 'check' in the sense of 'upbraid,' and his fondness for 'the possessive inflexion with nouns of all kinds,' frequent enough, by the way, in Lodge. He is thoroughly justified, too, in expressing his belief that 'exclamatory lines beginning with "how" or "O how"' are peculiar to Peele, though his statement that he cannot find them in Marlowe, Kyd, or Greene is somewhat amazing in view of the second quotation given above from *Edward II.*, a passage bearing a close resemblance to one in the play which he had under examination at the time.<sup>1</sup> Such oversights, however, are easy even for one with Mr. Sykes's extensive knowledge of our old drama. As regards the other small, and therefore important, matters to which Mr. Sykes has drawn attention (as referred to above), 'check' in the sense of 'upbraid' is found in scene 9 of *Leir*; instances (they may or may not be the only ones) of what may be termed 'Kyd's possessive' in that play are 'fortune's force' (scene 1) and 'honour's height' (scene 7), and 'paltry' is quite a common word, occurring in scenes 15, 25, and 30. Evidently it was a favourite of the author of that part of *Leir* as of the author of parts of *Soliman* and *Arden*.

What is the inference to be drawn from the facts here set down? If *Leir* be Peele's, as I agree with Mr. Sykes in thinking that it is (though Lodge also may be concerned in it), is his hand to be seen in *Arden of Feversham* (and incidentally in *Soliman and Perseda* also)? or was he filching

<sup>1</sup> Since this article was written, Mr. J. M. Robertson, in his exceedingly able *Introduction to the Study of the Shakespear Canon*, has directed attention to this and one or two other matters mentioned above in connection with *Leir*.

from *Arden*? or was *Arden* filching from him? or are we wrong in supposing *Leir* to be wholly Peele's, and were both Marlowe and Kyd concerned in it? That is a question that may be left for abler men than myself to settle. The problem is one of some importance, in view of the use Shakespeare made of the play and its own not inconsiderable merits; but tied up with it is the still more important question of the authorship of *Arden of Feversham*.

The points of contact between this remarkable tragedy and the drama of Marlowe are numerous; and they are invariably accounted for by a theory of plagiarism on the part of the anonymous writer. To both Mr. Crawford and Mr. Sykes (and not to them alone) a parallel between *Arden* and either *The Spanish Tragedy* or *Soliman and Perseda* is a proof of Kyd's presence, while every parallel with *Edward II.* is treated as plagiarism by Kyd from Marlowe. That there can be any other explanation of the verbal resemblances between *Arden* and Marlowe's acknowledged plays than cribbing on the part of the author of the anonymous play does not seem to have occurred to any writer on the subject; yet it should be obvious that there are two other possibilities. The one is, that Marlowe himself may be the plagiarist. The other is, that Marlowe was the author, or one of the authors, of *Arden*, and is as responsible for the passages in that play as for those in his acknowledged work. It may be urged that, as there are parallels to *Edward II.*, not only in *Arden*, but also in several other plays (including *Soliman*), it is inherently more probable that the cribbing should be *from* than *for* the *Edward*; but there is no reason why the argument should not be applied to *Arden* also, since such parallels are to be found not merely between it and *Edward II.*, but also between it and *Soliman*, *Leir*, *Selimus*, *Woodstock*, the two parts of *The Troublesome Reign of King John*, *The Spanish Tragedy*, and others, to say nothing of plays, such as *Richard III.*, *Cromwell*, and *Oldcastle*, where the theft

must be *from*, and not *for*, *Arden*. In the homely old phrase, 'what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander'; and, when Shakespeare himself notoriously plagiarised, there seems no good reason for denying the possibility of Marlowe having indulged in the practice. On the whole, however, it seems less likely that *Arden* was either stealing from *Edward II.* or *Edward II.* from *Arden* than that Marlowe was merely repeating himself.

That he was given to doing so must be obvious to any student of his work. *Edward II.*, for instance, echoes passages from *Massacre at Paris*, *Jew of Malta*, *Faustus*, and *Dido*. It is this habit that is made the basis for accrediting to him a large share in the second and third *Henry VI.* plays, in both their original and their revised forms. Why the parallels between these plays and *Edward II.* should be regarded as proving Marlowe's authorship of both, while similar parallels between *Edward II.* and *Arden* are taken to signify plagiarism in the latter, is a question calling loudly for an answer, though I am not aware that the call has ever been heard. If heard, it has been ignored.

If the two cases are to be treated in the one way, Marlowe is to be regarded as author, or part-author, of *Arden* and the two 'Contention' plays, as well as of *Edward II.* or as a plagiarist from all three. Professor Tucker Brooke has shown clearly, in his *Authorship of the Second and Third Parts of 'King Henry VI.'*, that lines appearing in *Edward II.* and one or other of the 'Contention' plays are proper to the latter, and that therefore *Edward II.* was the copier.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The references in *The Contention* to Suffolk's tilting in France, to the trouble with O'Neill and his 'Irish kernes,' and to 'sterne Fawconbridge' commanding 'the narrow seas' are all historically accurate, while the parallel references in *Edward II.* to the king's tilting in France, to a successful rebellion by the O'Neill, and to a command of 'the narrow seas' by 'the haughty Dane' have no foundation in fact. As Professor Brooke says: 'It would seem preposterous to believe that historically unfounded lines were needlessly invented by Marlowe in *Edward II.*, and that these lines were then later found to fit precisely the historic facts presented in the *Henry VI.* plays. The debt must lie the other way.'

That being so, there can be no valid objection to regarding it as the copier in the case of the parallels with *Arden of Feversham* also. But there are sound reasons for preferring the alternative theory, that these parallels are indicative, not of plagiarism from one author by another, but of an author's repetition of his own work. Let me put the case for Marlowe:

Firstly, there are the parallels themselves:

*Arden*, I. : Is this the end of all thy solemn oaths? / Is this the fruit thy reconcilment buds?

*Edward*, 6 : Is this the love you bear your sovereign? / Is this the fruit your reconcilment bears? (Compare also *Spanish Tragedy*, / IV. 1.)<sup>1</sup>

*Arden*, III. 2 : This drowsiness in me bodes little good.

*Edward*, 19 : This drowsiness / Betides no good.

*Arden*, V. 1 : I have my wish in that I joy thy sight.

*Edward*, 1 : I have my wish in that I joy thy sight.

There are many minor parallels, but these are the ones mainly relied on to prove 'gross copying by Kyd', as Crawford puts it. He makes a strong point of another brace of passages in which the only resemblance is a reference to 'Tisiphone'; and Brooke also classes this among Kyd's 'undoubted pilferings'; but it may safely

<sup>1</sup> 'This play,' says Mr. Crawford (*Collectanea*, vol. i.), 'repeats *Edward II.* more than once.' Though, owing to Elizabethan habits of interpolation with every revival of a play, that is not improbable, the chances are that *The Spanish Tragedy*, as the older of the two, is the one that was drawn on.

<sup>2</sup> Here is this absurd "parallel":

"I shall no more be closed in Arden's arms,  
That, like the snakes of black Tisiphone,  
Sting me with their embracings." (*Arden*, V. 1.)

"But, if proud Mortimer do wear this crown,  
Heavens turn it to a blaze of quenchless fire,  
Or like the snaky wreath of Tisiphon  
Engirt the temples of his hateful head!" (*Edward II.*, 21.)

be ignored, as having no bearing on the question. Of the three quoted here, the second strikes one as not being a passage likely to appeal to, or even to attract, the notice of a plagiarist. (Heywood, in the first part of *The Fair Maid of the West*, V. 2, has the same idea, 'My drowsiness should not presage me good.') There are many other Marlowe parallels, of which a few may be mentioned:

- I. 1 : Grow outrageous. *Edward*, 6 : Wax outrageous.  
 Women will be false and wavering. *Edward*, 5 : Our lady's first love is not wavering.  
 Ovid-like. *Edward*, 4 : Midas-like.  
 Sweet Mosbie is the man that hath my heart. *Massacre*, 19 : Sweet Mugeroun, 'tis he that hath my heart.  
 The lowly earth. *Massacre*, 30 : The lowly earth. *Edward*, 4 : The lowly ground.
- II. 1 : On his upper lip / A mutchado, which he wound about his ear. *Jew*, IV. 5 : Draws out his grisly beard / And winds it twice or thrice about his ear.
- III. 1 : Then fix his sad eyes on the sullen earth. 1 *Tamburlaine*, I. 2 : His fiery eyes are fixed upon the earth. 1 *Contention*, I. 2 : Why are thine eyes fixed to the sullen earth? (See also No. 29 of Shakespeare's Sonnets.)
- III. 5 : It grieves me not to see how foul thou art, / But mads me that ever I thought thee fair. *Edward*, 6 : It grieves me that I favoured him.
- I. 1 and IV. 4 : The Heavens can witness. *Edward*, 8 : Heavens can witness.
- III. 5 : Forslowed. *Edward*, 8, and 3 *Henry VI.*, II. 3 : Forslow.  
 And then conceal the rest, for 'tis too bad. *Edward*, 4 : I say no more : judge you the rest, my lord.
- V. 5 : Hell of grief, as in *Edward*, 4 and 26.

The list could be considerably swelled by the inclusion of parallels with the 'Contention' plays, if they are to be regarded as containing Marlowe's work; but there is no need to include anything to which exception can be taken; nor is notice taken of such commonplaces as 'it kills my heart', or the sickle-in-the-corn metaphor, or of such imitable (and imitated) Marlovian rants as 'With mighty furrows in his stormy brows' (II. 1), or 'The rancorous

venom of thy misswoln heart' (*Edward II.*, 2: 'Swoln with the venom of ambitious pride'); but it may perhaps be worth while to instance the swearing by heaven and earth in III. 4 of *Arden*, and scene xi. of *Edward II.*; and there certainly is significance in the use in the anonymous play of the common, every-day vocabulary of Marlowe. Thus we have 'seeing', for 'since', seven times in *Arden* and nine times in *Edward II.*, a fondness for the use of 'Ay' in both plays, a liking for the word 'ungentle', and the frequent employment of 'peasant', 'slave', and 'groom' as terms of abuse; while Marlowe's favourite ejaculation, 'Tush', occurs no less than ten times in *Arden*, though it has to be borne in mind that Kyd also used it.

Secondly, there are evidences of the presence of more than one hand in the play. When one takes into consideration all the circumstances of Elizabethan dramatic authorship, it does not do to be too ready, when one ascertains the presence of a certain writer in an anonymous play, to assume that no one else was concerned in it. Indeed, the probabilities are greater in favour of an anonymous play being by more than one author than of its being the work of one man alone. Rather than give two or three names on a title-page, a publisher might have preferred to give none. In this play there seem to be two hands at least, and not improbably three; but the collaboration would appear to have been of an unusually intimate nature. If Kyd and Marlowe be both concerned, there are yet passages—such, for instance, as Clarke's description (at the close of Act I.) of the way in which he works with his poisons—that cannot well be attributed to either. It may be noted, too, that there is a strange outburst of punning in the first three scenes of Act III., and nowhere else. This may or may not be Kyd's.

Thirdly, there are passages in the play that are quite beyond the reach of Kyd, as we know him—beyond, in

fact, the reach of every dramatist of the time, save Marlowe and the young Shakespeare. Take, for instance, the magnificent quarrel scene between Alice and Mosbie in III. 5. Who, outside of those two, prior to 1592, was capable of writing the two chief speeches of that dialogue? May we not go so far as to say that at that time Marlowe alone could have done it? In view of this and other passages, it is always difficult to understand how this tragedy can be so often treated as if it were lacking in poetry. The idea at the bottom of the misconception is presumably that nothing can be realistic without being prosaic.

Fourthly, it would not help to prove Marlowe's presence merely to give reasons for thinking that the play was not the work of one man or even to show that some of it was of a higher poetic value than anything Kyd was known to have given us: it is necessary to show that these superior passages are in the style of Marlowe. What, then, of this from III. 5?—

Nothing shall hide me from thy stormy look.  
 If thou cry war, there is no peace for me.  
 I will do penance for offending thee,  
 And burn this prayer book, where I here use  
 The holy word that had converted me.  
 See, Mosbie, I will tear away the leaves,  
 And all the leaves; and in this golden cover  
 Shall thy sweet phrases and thy letters dwell;  
 And thereon will I chiefly meditate,  
 And hold no other sect but such devotion.

Is not that the authentic voice of Marlowe? If not, whose is it? Can it possibly strike anyone as being Kyd's? And it must be borne in mind that, if this be Marlowe, his style is peeping out in spite of himself, for the epilogue speaks of a deliberate intention to avoid 'glosing stuff' as unsuitable to a 'naked tragedy'. The same artistic purpose is visible there as is to be seen in the prologue to *Tamburlaine*, with its scornful rejection of 'jigging veins



of rhyming mother-wits, / And such conceits as clownage keeps in pay.' Is there any other instance in our ancient drama of the expression of a determination to fit the verse to the artistic requirements of the story? If not, there is significance in this fact.

Fifthly, if the presence of Kyd be conceded, it adds to the probability of Marlowe's co-operation. The two men are known to have been 'writing in one chamber' in 1591; and the chances in favour of their having written plays together are considerable. Marlowe's passion, power, and poetry and Kyd's stagecraft, mastery of plot, and command of dramatic irony would have made an almost ideal combination. There is, however, I venture to think, more evidence of the presence of Marlowe than of that of Kyd, for 50 per cent of the argument in favour of the latter is based upon his supposed authorship of *Soliman and Perseda*, which is itself dependent entirely on internal evidence, the only external evidence that we possess pointing to Peele's responsibility, though its value is not perhaps very great. One is not justified in treating an ascription arrived at on internal evidence alone as unquestionable; and, though Kyd's hand certainly seems traceable throughout, we cannot be much more sure in *Soliman* than in *Arden* that the numerous textual resemblances to *Edward II.* are not due rather to Marlowe's habit of self-repetition than to plagiarism by or from Kyd.

Sixthly, the writer, or one of the writers, of *Arden of Feversham* was one who had an intimate knowledge of the history, topography, and personalities of the county of Kent. The chances are strongly in favour of his having been a Kent man. Amongst all the early dramatists, there are but two who 'fill the bill'—Marlowe and Lyly; and from these two there can be little hesitation in selecting Marlowe as the likelier.

Here, then, is the case for Marlowe. Those who regard him as having repeated himself in *Edward II.* from the

'Contention' plays in both their earlier and their later forms should not apply other principles to the consideration of *Arden*; if they look upon the *Arden* parallels as pilferings, they should declare against Marlowe's participation in the 'Contention' plays, and, inasmuch as Marlowe must have been the thief in that case, ask themselves why it should not have been he who did the lifting in the case of *Arden* also.

The relation of *Edward II.* to *Arden* is one of the most important questions to be solved in Elizabethan research; and mixed up with it is the relation of each of them to *Soliman* and *Leir*, and the relation of these two to one another. Every one of the four plays is textually more or less closely connected with all the others; but the connection varies in character. Thus, though it might be easy to account for the nearness of the relationship between *Soliman*, *Edward II.*, and *Arden* by assuming them all to be the result of close co-operation between Kyd and Marlowe, the fact remains that, while the style of Marlowe is paralleled in *Arden*, it is not in *Soliman*. To assume that in the former case Kyd or some other writer is imitating Marlowe's manner gets us nowhere, and the theory, if accepted, leads only to the utter negation of scholarship. In point of fact, however much the Elizabethans may have stolen lines and ideas and incidents, they were to no marked extent stealers of style. They may have been thieves; but they were not copyists. If, then, the style of Marlowe is to be found in *Arden*, it is to be regarded as the work of Marlowe, unless good reason can be shown to the contrary. It is, in fact, more Marlovian than *Edward II.*, which is sufficiently unlike earlier plays by the same writer to make one feel sure that Marlowe's authorship would not have been unanimously conceded had his name not been to it. If his part-authorship of *Arden* be granted, one sees Marlowe from a new angle; and, if he be regarded as in any way responsible for the creation of those two amusing

ruffians, Black Will and Shakebag, a new conception of his versatility will have to be entertained. They are just the kind of flamboyant blackguards to be expected from him.

The student of *Arden* and *Soliman* and *Edward II.* must also carefully consider the possibility of the presence of Peele. The expression 'abhors from' occurs in *Arden*, as in *David and Bethsabe*; 'trust me,' which Mr. Sykes regards as a special mark of Peele, is found no less than four times; and the prediction, in IV. 1, that Arden will be sent 'to long home', may also be argued to be Peele's. In *Edward II.* we have a line, 'It is but temporal that thou canst inflict,' which is found also in Peele's *Edward I.*, and Mr. Sykes will attach importance to the threefold occurrence of the explanatory 'I mean' in the former play, and also perhaps to 'what resteth' in scene 19, and 'for the nonce' in scene 26. The tautology which he considers so particularly a characteristic of Peele, but is, in fact, to be seen in most of the early plays, may be met more than once in both *Arden* and *Edward II.*, and in both there are marked resemblances to the two parts of *The Troublesome Reign*, which is claimed for Peele. On the meaning of these things I express no opinion. The only definite conclusions I put forward are: (1) That Marlowe's hand is to be seen in *Arden*, as in *Edward II.*; (2) that another writer, probably Kyd, was concerned in both *Arden* and *Soliman*; (3) that *Leir* is wholly or mainly the work of Peele. I hold, moreover, that while the resemblances between *Arden* and *Soliman* and between *Arden* and *Edward II.* are due to identity of authorship, those between *Edward* and either *Soliman* or *Leir* are not to be so accounted for, since Marlowe's style is not to be seen in these two anonymous plays.

*Postscript.*—Since the above was written, I have, by a curious chance, made a discovery that raises a fresh problem in regard to the authorship of *Arden of Feversham*, since

it suggests the presence in that play of the hand of Samuel Rowley; and, by a singular coincidence, the work of Mr. Dugdale Sykes is again involved.

The discovery I have made is of the close connection between parts of *Arden* and parts of Rowley's chronicle play, *When you see me, you know me*. In setting it down to chance, I am doing myself no injustice, for it came about thus. I recently took advantage of an opportunity of acquiring a copy of Rowley's drama, one of the few extant plays of Shakespeare's day that I had never read. After finishing the above article, I took up *When you see me*, not for purposes of study, but merely for recreative reading; and it was greatly to my astonishment that I soon found myself being put into a position to regard *Arden* from yet another angle. But, before going into this, let me first say a word or two regarding Samuel Rowley and the debt under which his reputation lies to a distinguished modern investigator.

In 1919 Mr. Sykes read before the Shakespeare Association a paper showing reasons for attributing to the author of *When you see me*, the prose parts of *A Shrew*, *The Famous Victories of Henry V.*, the bulk of the additions to Marlowe's *Faustus*, the prose clowning in Greene's *Orlando*, and the prose in *Wily Beguiled*. The basis of his argument was the similarity of the vocabulary in these various plays and portions of plays—phrases such as 'I warrant you', 'as passeth', 'let me alone' (followed by 'with' or 'to'), 'you had best', 'much ado'; exclamations such as 'sounds' (or 'zounds') and 'O brave'. And the amazing thing is that, as, in studying *Arden* and *Leir*, he missed the connections between the two, so, in discovering the presence of Rowley in all sorts of unexpected places, he failed to see that there existed evidence no less clear for attributing to that writer portions of a play with which he was particularly well acquainted—*Arden of Feversham*.

The only scenes with which I am concerned are, in *When you see me*, those portions of 5 and 6 in which Black Will is present (these being the only two scenes in which he appears), and, in *Arden*, parts of II. 1 and 2, III. 2 and 4, parts of III. 6 and IV. 3, parts of IV. 4 and V. 1, and V. 4—in fact, all those scenes, and those scenes alone, in which another Black Will graces the stage.

That the hectoring ruffian of each play is named 'Black Will' is a circumstance to which too much importance must not be attached; but, when we find that the two scoundrels are blood brothers in character and speech, this is surely a fact to which some significance is to be attributed. Firstly, let me draw attention to the resemblances between a couple of passages in scene 5 of *When you see me* and passages in three separate scenes of *Arden*:

*When you see me*: 'I am as safe as in a *sanctuary*. It is a hard world when Black Will for a venture of five pound must commit such *petty robberies* at Mile End; but the plain truth is, *the stews from whence I had my quaterage* is now grown too hot for me. . . . I am chief commander of all the stews. *There's not a whore* shifts a smock but by my privilege, nor *opens shop* before I have my *weekly tribute*.'

*Arden*, V. 4: 'I am so pressed with hues and cries / For *petty robberies* that I have done / That I can come unto no *sanctuary*.'

*Arden*, II. 2: 'And sweet Alice Arden, with a lap of crowns, / Comes, with a lowly curtesy to the earth, / Saying, "Take this but for *thy quaterage*; / *Such yearly tribute will I answer thee*."'

*Arden*, V. 1: '*The bawdy houses have paid me tribute; there durst not a whore set up, unless she have agreed with me first for opening her shop windows*.'

In every case, be it noted, it is Black Will who speaks. Nothing is to be inferred from the fact that both ruffians are braggarts; but much may be inferred from the further fact that for each of them it is his swordsmanship that is his particular pride. The Black Will of the chronicle play describes (in scene 6) his buckler as his sconce, his castle; so we have the other Black Will saying, in V. 1 of *Arden*: 'A buckler in a skilful hand is as good as a castle; nay,

'tis better than a sconce.' The one had been a soldier, and claims to have been a corporal (*Arden*, II. 1); the other (*When you see me*, 6), expresses his longing for the wars, and asks to be made a corporal. 'I'll teach you to stand upon intergatories,' he cries in scene 5, while his namesake in *Arden* (III. 6) says indignantly: 'You were best swear me on the interrogatories.' Considering the very small part the swarthy blackguard plays in the chronicle drama, this is surely a remarkable list of parallels.

I have, so far, confined my attention to resemblances between the utterances of the two Wills; but I must also consider to what extent the one in *Arden* displays what Mr. Sykes regards as the characteristics of Rowleian clowns. While Black Will is on the stage, 'souns' is heard ten times, 'I warrant' five times, 'let me alone' twice, and 'I made no more ado' once. Moreover, the ejaculation 'Tush!' which is very common in *A Shrew*, though Mr. Sykes does not mention it, is found five times in these portions of *Arden*. If 'you had best' does not occur, 'you were best' does, twice; and, when Mr. Sykes attaches importance (quite rightly) to the resemblance of 'Your good words have something laid my choler' in *Wily Beguiled* to 'Your fair words hath something alaid my choler' in *A Shrew*, he will not deny the significance of 'Your excuse hath somewhat mollified my choler' in III. 4 of *Arden*. He has also pointed out the excessive thirstiness of the Rowleian comic personages. In this respect also, the Black Will of *Arden* fulfils the requirements. 'I'll drink no more water, for thy sake, while this lasts,' he declares; and again, 'We'll bait at Rochester, where I'll give thee a gallon of sack'; and yet again, 'Let's go drink: choler makes me as dry as a dog,' just as the clown Dick in the *Faustus* additions tells us he is 'as dry as a dog'.

What is to be deduced from all this? To suppose the likeness between the two Black Wills to be accidental

would be absurd. Either we must assume Rowley to be responsible for both, or in the chronicle play to have been borrowing from the early domestic tragedy. If we accept the theory of plagiarism, what reason have we to suppose that he was really the author of *The Famous Victories* and parts of *A Shrew*? We know that Rowley's work is to be seen in *When you see me* and the additions to *Faustus*; but in the other cases his participation is inferred only because of identity of vocabulary; and plagiarism may sufficiently account for it. Rowley, as an actor of clowns' parts, might have been peculiarly liable to such repetition of the phraseology of parts he had himself played; but it seems to me that the fact that these resemblances are spread over so considerable a number of plays favours the theory of identity of authorship. But, if we grant that Rowley was indeed responsible for all that Mr. Sykes claims for him, how can we deny him the responsibility also for the Black Will portions of *Arden of Feversham*?

I do not bind myself to the acceptance or rejection of either view: I am concerned only to point out the problem and to invite some of our more learned investigators to endeavour to solve it. The way is strewn with difficulties.

I wish to say, in conclusion, that this new discovery in no way affects the views regarding *Arden* enunciated in the main part of this paper—that Marlowe's hand is to be seen in it, and that another writer, probably Kyd, was concerned; but it does somewhat strengthen my suspicion that the work may not, as it stands, have been confined to those two.

# DYSERT

*By* L. ST. SENAN

GRAY<sup>E</sup>R than the tide below, the tower;  
The day is gray above;  
About the walls  
A curlew flies, calls;  
Rain threatens, west;  
This hour,  
Driving,  
I thought of how this land so desolate,  
Long, long ago was rich in living—  
More reckless, consciously, in strife,  
More conscious daring-delicate  
In love.

And then the tower veered  
Grayly to me,  
Passed. . . .  
I meditated—  
Feared  
The thought experience sent,  
That the gold years  
Of Limerick life  
Might be but consecrated  
Lie,  
Heroic lives  
So often merely meant  
The brave stupidity of soldiers,  
The proud stupidity of soldiers' wives.



# THE WOMAN WHO RODE AWAY

By D. H. LAWRENCE

## II.

Yet when there was a stirring, and a clink of flint and steel, and the form of a man crouching like a dog over a bone, at a red splutter of fire, and she knew it was morning coming, it seemed to her the night had passed too soon.

When the fire was going, she came out of her shelter with one real desire left: for coffee. The men were warming more tortillas.

'Can we make coffee?' she asked.

The young man looked at her, and she imagined the same faint spark of derision in his eyes. He shook his head.

'We don't take it,' he said. 'There is no time.'

And the elder men, squatting on their haunches, looked up at her in the terrible paling dawn, and there was not even derision in their eyes. Only that intense, yet remote, inhuman glitter which was terrible to her. They were inaccessible. They could not see her as a woman at all. As if she *were* not a woman. As if, perhaps, her whiteness took away all her womanhood, and left her as some giant, female white ant. That was all they could see in her.

Before the sun was up, she was in the saddle again, and they were climbing steeply, in the icy air. The sun came, and soon she was very hot, exposed to the glare in the bare places. It seemed to her they were climbing to the roof of the world. Beyond against heaven were slashes of snow.

During the course of the morning, they came to a place where the horse could not go further. They rested for a time with a great slant of living rock in front of them, like the glossy breast of some earth-beast. Across this rock, along a wavering crack, they had to go. It seemed to her that for hours she went in torment, on her hands and knees, from crack to crevice, along the slanting face of this pure rock-mountain. An Indian in front and an Indian behind walked slowly erect, shod with sandals of braided leather. But she in her riding-boots dared not stand erect.

Yet what she wondered, all the time, was why she persisted in clinging and crawling along these mile-long sheets of rock. Why she did not hurl herself down, and have done! The world was below her.

When they emerged at last on a stony slope, she looked back, and saw the third Indian coming carrying her saddle and saddle bags on his back, the whole hung from a band across his forehead. And he had his hat in his hand, as he stepped slowly, with the slow, soft, heavy tread of the Indian, unwavering in the chinks of rock, as if along a scratch in the mountain's iron shield.

The stony slope led downwards. The Indians seemed to grow excited. One ran ahead at a slow trot, disappearing round the curve of stones. And the track curved round and down, till at last in the full blaze of the mid-morning sun, they could see a valley below them, between walls of rock, as in a great wide chasm let in the mountains. A green valley, with a river, and trees, and clusters of low flat sparkling houses. It was all tiny and perfect, three thousand feet below. Even the flat bridge over the stream, and the square with the houses around it, the bigger building piled up at opposite ends of the square, the tall cotton-wood trees, the pastures and stretches of yellow-sere maize, the patches of brown sheep or goats in the distance, on the slopes, the railed enclosures by the stream-

side. There it was, all small and perfect, looking magical, as any place will look magical, seen from the mountains above. The unusual thing was that the low houses glittered white, whitewashed, looking like crystals of salt, or silver. This frightened her.

They began the long, winding descent at the head of the barranca, following the stream that rushed and fell. At first it was all rocks: then the pine-trees began, and soon, the silver-limbed aspens. The flowers of autumn, big pink daisy-like flowers, and white ones, and many yellow flowers, were in profusion. But she had to sit down and rest, she was so weary. And she saw the bright flowers shadowily, as pale shadows hovering, as one who is dead must see them.

At length came grass and pasture-slopes between mingled aspen and pine-trees. A shepherd, naked in the sun save for his hat and his cotton loin-cloth, was driving his brown sheep away. In a grove of trees they sat and waited, she and the young Indian. The one with the saddle had also gone forward.

They heard a sound of someone coming. It was three men, in fine sarapes of red and orange and yellow and black, and with brilliant feather head-dresses. The oldest had his grey hair braided with fur, and his red and orange-yellow sarape was covered with curious black markings, like a leopard-skin. The other two were not grey-haired, but they were elders too. Their blankets were in stripes, and their head-dresses not so elaborate.

The young Indian addressed the elders in a few quiet words. They listened without answering or looking at him or at the woman, keeping their faces averted and their eyes turned to the ground, only listening. And at length they turned and looked at the woman.

The old chief, or medicine-man, whatever he was, had a deeply wrinkled and lined face of dark bronze, with a few sparse grey hairs round the mouth. Two long braids

of grey hair, braided with fur and coloured feathers, hung on his shoulders. And yet, it was only his eyes that mattered. They were black and of extraordinary piercing strength, without a qualm of misgiving in their demonish, dauntless power. He looked into the eyes of the white woman with a long, piercing look, seeking she knew not what. She summoned all her strength to meet his eyes and keep up her guard. But it was no good. He was not looking at her as one human being looks at another. He never even perceived her resistance or her challenge, but looked past them both, into she knew not what.

She could see it was hopeless to expect any human communication with this old being.

He turned and said a few words to the young Indian.

'He asks what do you seek here?' said the young man in Spanish.

'I? Nothing! I only came to see what it was like.'

This was again translated, and the old man turned his eyes on her once more. Then he spoke again, in his low muttering tone, to the young Indian.

'He says, why does she leave her house with the white men? Does she want to bring the white man's God to the Chilchui?'

'No,' she replied, foolhardy. 'I came away from the white man's God myself. I came to look for the God of the Chilchui.'

Profound silence followed, when this was translated. Then the old man spoke again, in a small voice almost of weariness.

'Does the white woman seek the gods of the Chilchui because she is weary of her own God?' came the question.

'Yes, she does. She is tired of the white man's God,' she replied, thinking that was what they wanted her to say. She would like to serve the gods of the Chilchui.

She was aware of an extraordinary thrill of triumph and exultance passing through the Indians, in the tense silence

that followed when this was translated. Then they all looked at her with piercing black eyes, in which a steely covetous intent glittered incomprehensible. She was the more puzzled, as there was nothing sensual or sexual in the look. It had a terrible glittering purity that was beyond her. *She was afraid, she would have been paralysed with fear*, had not something died within her, leaving her with a cold, watchful wonder only.

The elders talked a little while, then the two went away, leaving her with the young man and the oldest chief. The old man now looked at her with a certain solicitude.

'He says are you tired?' asked the young man.

'Very tired,' she said.

'The men will bring you a carriage,' said the young Indian.

The carriage, when it came, proved to be a litter consisting of a sort of hammock of dark woollen frieze, slung on to a pole which was born on the shoulders of two long-haired Indians. The woollen hammock was spread on the ground, she sat down on it, and the two men raised the pole to their shoulders. Swinging rather as if she were in a sack, she was carried out of the grove of trees, following the old chief, whose leopard-spotted blanket moved curiously in the sunlight.

They had emerged in the valley-head. Just in front were the maize fields, with ripe ears of maize. The corn was not very tall, in this high altitude. The well-worn path went between it, and all she could see was the erect form of the old chief, in the flame and black sarape, stepping soft and heavy and swift, his head forward, looking to neither to right nor left. Her bearers followed, stepping rhythmically, the long blue-black hair glistening like a river down the naked shoulders of the man in front.

They passed the maize, and came to a big wall or earth-work made of earth and adobe bricks. The wooden doors were open. Passing on, they were in a network of small

gardens, full of flowers and herbs and fruit trees, each garden watered by a tiny ditch of running water. Among each cluster of trees and flowers was a small, glittering white house, windowless, and with closed door. The place was a network of little paths, small streams, and little bridges among square, flowering gardens.

Following the broadest path—a soft narrow track between leaves and grass, a path worn smooth by centuries of human feet, no hoof of horse nor any wheel to disfigure it—they came to the little river of swift bright water, and crossed on a log bridge. Everything was silent—there was not human being anywhere. The road went on under magnificent cotton-wood trees. It emerged suddenly outside the central plaza or square of the village.

This was a long oblong of low white houses with flat roofs, and two bigger buildings, having as it were little square huts piled on top of bigger long huts, stood at either end of the oblong, facing each other rather askew. Every little house was a dazzling white, save for the great round beam-ends which projected under the flat eaves, and for the flat roofs. Round each of the bigger buildings, on the outside of the square, was a stockyard fence, inside which was garden with trees and flowers, and various small houses.

Not a soul was in sight. They passed silently between the houses into the central square. This was quite bare and arid, the earth trodden smooth by endless generations of passing feet, passing across from door to door. All the doors of the windowless houses gave on to this blank square, but all the doors were closed. The firewood lay near the threshold, a clay oven was still smoking, but there was no sign of moving life.

The old man walked straight across the square to the big house at the end, where the two upper storeys, as in a house of toy bricks, stood each one smaller than the lower one. A stone staircase, outside, led up to the roof of the first storey.

At the foot of this staircase the litter-bearers stood still, and lowered the woman to the ground.

'You will come up,' said the young Indian who spoke Spanish.

She mounted the stone stairs to the earthen roof of the first house, which formed a platform round the wall of the second storey. She followed around this platform to the back of the big house. There they descended again, into the garden at the rear.

So far they had seen no one. But now two men appeared, bare-headed, with long-braided hair, and wearing a sort of white shirt gathered into a loin-cloth. These went along with the three newcomers, across the garden where red flowers and yellow flowers were blooming, to a long, low white house. There they entered without knocking.

It was dark inside. There was a low murmur of men's voices. Several men were present, their white shirts showing in the gloom, their dark faces invisible. They were sitting on a great log of smooth old wood, that lay along the far wall. And save for this log, the room seemed empty. But no, in the dark at one end was a couch, a sort of bed, and someone lying there, covered with furs.

The old Indian in the spotted sarape, who had accompanied the woman, now took off his hat and his blanket and his sandals. Laying them aside, he approached the couch, and spoke in a low voice. For some moments there was no answer. Then an old man with the snow-white hair hanging round his darkly-visible face, roused himself like a vision, and leaned on one elbow, looking vaguely at the company, in tense silence.

The grey-haired Indian spoke again, and then the young Indian, taking the woman's hand, led her forward. In her linen riding habit, and black boots and hat, and her pathetic bit of a red tie, she stood there beside the fur-covered bed of the old, old man, who sat reared up, leaning on one elbow, remote as a ghost, his white hair streaming

in disorder, his face almost black, yet with a far-off intentness, not of this world, leaning forward to look at her.

His face was so old, it was like dark glass, and the few curling hairs that sprang white from his lips and chin were quite incredible. The long white locks fell unbraided and disorderly on either side of the glassy dark face. And under a faint powder of white eyebrows, the black eyes of the old chief looked at her as if from the far, far dead, seeing something that was never to be seen.

At last he spoke a few deep, hollow words, as if to the dark air.

'He says, do you bring your heart to the god of the Chilchui?' translated the young Indian.

'Tell him yes,' she said, automatically.

There was a pause. The old Indian spoke again, as if to the air. One of the men present went out. There was a silence as if of eternity, in the dim room that was lighted only through the open door.

The woman looked round. Four old men with grey hair sat on the log by the wall facing the door. Two other men, powerful and impassive, stood near the door. They all had long hair, and wore white shirts gathered into a loin-cloth. Their powerful legs were naked and dark. There was a silence like eternity.

At length the man returned, with white and black clothing on his arm. The young Indian took them, and holding them in front of the woman, said:

'You must take off your clothes, and put these on.'

'If all you men will go out,' she said.

'No one will hurt you,' he said quietly.

'Not while you men are here,' she said.

He looked at the two men by the door. They came quickly forward, and suddenly gripped her arms as she stood, without hurting her, but with great power. Then two of the old men came, and with curious skill slit her boots down with keen knives, and drew them off, and slit her



clothing so that it came away from her. In a few moments she stood there white and uncovered. The old man on the bed spoke, and they turned her round for him to see. He spoke again, and the young Indian deftly took the pins and comb from her fair hair, so that it fell over her shoulders in a bunchy tangle.

Then the old man spoke again. The Indian led her to the bedside. The white-haired, glassy-dark old man moistened his finger-tips at his mouth, and most delicately touched her on the breasts and on the body, then on the back. And she winced strangely each time, as the finger-tips drew along her skin, as if Death itself were touching her.

And she wondered, almost sadly, why she did not feel shamed in her nakedness. She only felt sad and lost. Because nobody felt ashamed. The elder men were all dark and tense with some other deep, gloomy, incomprehensible emotion, which suspended all her agitation, while the young Indian had a strange look of ecstasy on his face. And she, she was only utterly strange and beyond herself, as if her body were not her own.

They gave her the new clothing: a long white cotton shift, that came to her knees: then a tunic of thick blue woollen stuff, embroidered with scarlet and green flowers. It was fastened over one shoulder only, and belted with a braid sash of scarlet and black wool.

When she was thus dressed, they took her away, barefoot, to a little house in the stockaded garden. The young Indian told her she might have what she wanted. She asked for water to wash herself. He brought it in a jar, together with a long wooden bowl. Then he fastened the gate-door of her house, and left her a prisoner. She could see through the bars of the gate door of her house, the red flowers of the garden, and a humming bird. Then from the roof of the big house she heard the long, heavy sound of a drum, unearthly to her in its summons, and an

uplifted voice calling from the housetop in a strange language, with a far-away emotionless intonation, delivering some speech or message. And she listened as if from the dead.

But she was very tired. She lay down on a couch of skins, pulling over her the blanket of dark wool, and she slept, giving up everything.

When she woke it was late afternoon, and the young Indian was entering with a basket-tray containing food, tortillas and corn-mush with bits of meat, probably mutton, and a drink made of honey, and some fresh plums. He brought her also a long garland of red and yellow flowers with knots of blue buds at the end. He sprinkled the garland with water from a jar, then offered it to her, with a smile. He seemed very gentle and thoughtful, and on his face and in his dark eyes was a curious look of triumph and ecstasy, that frightened her a little. The glitter had gone from the black eyes, with their curving dark lashes, and he would look at her with this strange soft glow of ecstasy that was not quite human, and terribly impersonal, and which made her uneasy.

'Is there anything you want?' he said, in his low, slow, melodious voice, that always seemed withheld, as if he were speaking aside to somebody else, or as if he did not want to let the sound come out to her.

'Am I going to be kept a prisoner here?' she asked.

'No, you can walk in the garden to-morrow,' he said softly. Always this curious solicitude.

'Do you like that drink?' he said, offering her a little earthenware cup. 'It is very refreshing.'

She sipped the liquor curiously. It was made with herbs and sweetened with honey, and had a strange, lingering flavour. The young man watched her with gratification.

'It has a peculiar taste,' she said.

'It is very refreshing,' he replied, his black eyes resting on her always with that look of gratified ecstasy. Then he

went away. And presently she began to be sick, and to vomit violently, as if she had no control over herself.

Afterwards she felt a great soothing languor steal over her, her limbs felt strong and loose and full of languor, and she lay on her couch listening to the sounds of the village, watching the yellowing sky, smelling the scent of burning cedar-wood, or pine-wood. So distinctly she heard the yapping of tiny dogs, the shuffle of far-off feet, the murmur of voices, so keenly she detected the smell of smoke, and flowers, and evening falling, so vividly she saw the one bright star infinitely remote, stirring above the sunset, that she felt as if all her senses were diffused on the air, that she could distinguish the sound of evening flowers unfolding, and the actual crystal sound of the heavens, as the vast belts of the world-atmospheres slid past one another, and as if the moisture ascending and the moisture descending in the air resounded like some harp in the cosmos.

She was a prisoner in her house and in the stockaded garden, but she scarcely minded. And it was days before she realised that she never saw another woman. Only the men, the elderly men of the big house, that she imagined must be some sort of temple, and the men priests of some sort. For they always had the same colours, red, orange, yellow, and black, and the same grave, abstracted demeanour.

Sometimes an old man would come and sit in her room with her, in absolute silence. None spoke any language but Indian, save the one younger man. The older men would smile at her, and sit with her for an hour at a time, sometimes smiling at her, when she spoke in Spanish, but never answering save with this slow, benevolent-seeming smile. And they gave off a feeling of almost fatherly solicitude. Yet their dark eyes, brooding over her, had something away in their depths that was awsomey ferocious and relentless. They would cover it with a smile, at once, if they felt her looking. But she had seen it.

Always they treated her with this curious impersonal solicitude, this utterly impersonal gentleness, as an old man treats a child. But underneath it she felt there was something else, something terrible. When her old visitor had gone away, in his silent, insidious, fatherly fashion, a shock of fear would come over her; though of what she knew not.

The young Indian would sit and talk with her freely, as if with great candour. But with him too she felt that everything real was unsaid. Perhaps it was unspeakable. His big dark eyes would rest on her almost cherishingly, touched with ecstasy, and his beautiful, slow, languorous voice would trail out its simple, ungrammatical Spanish. He told her he was the grandson of the old, old man, son of the man in the spotted sarape: and they were caciques, kings from the old, old days, before even the Spaniards came. But he himself had been in Mexico City, and also in the United States. He had worked as a laborer, building the roads in Los Angeles. He had travelled as far as Chicago.

‘Don’t you speak English, then?’ she asked.

His eyes rested on her with a curious look of duplicity and conflict and he mutely shook his head.

‘What did you do with your long hair, when you were in the United States?’ she asked. ‘Did you cut it off?’

Again, with the look of torment in his eyes, he shook his head.

‘No,’ he said, in the low, subdued voice, ‘I wore a hat, and a handkerchief tied round my head.’

And he relapsed into silence, as if of tormented memories.

‘Are you the only man of your people who has been to the United States?’ she asked him.

‘Yes. I am the only one who has been away from here for a long time. The others come back soon, in one week. They don’t stay away. The old men don’t let them.’

‘And why did you go?’

‘The old men want me to go—because I shall be the Cacique——’

He talked always with the same naiveté, an almost childish candour. But she felt that this was perhaps just the effect of his Spanish. Or perhaps speech altogether was unreal to him. Anyhow, she felt that all the real things were kept back.

He came and sat with her a good deal—sometimes more than she wished—as if he wanted to be near her. She asked him if he was married. He said he was—with two children.

‘I should like to see your children,’ she said.

But he answered only with that smile, a sweet, almost ecstatic smile, above which the dark eyes hardly changed from their enigmatic abstraction.

It was curious, he would sit with her by the hour, without ever making her self-conscious, or sex-conscious. He seemed to have no sex, as he sat there so still and gentle and apparently submissive, with his head bent a little forward, and the river of glistening black hair streaming maidenly over his shoulders.

Yet when she looked again, she saw his shoulders broad and powerful, his eye-brows black and level, the short, curved, obstinate black lashes over his lowered eyes, the small, fur-like line of moustache above his blackish, heavy lips, and the strong chin, and she knew that in some other mysterious way he was darkly and powerfully male. And he, feeling her watching him, would glance up at her swiftly with a dark, lurking look in his eyes, which immediately he veiled with that half-sad smile.

The days and the weeks went by, in a vague kind of contentment. She was uneasy sometimes, feeling she had lost the power over herself. She was not in her own power, she was under the spell of some other power. And at times she had moments of terror and horror. But then these Indians would come and sit with her, casting their insidious

spell over her by their very silent presence, their silent, sexless, powerful physical presence. As they sat they seemed to take her will away, leaving her will-less and victim to her own indifference. And the young man would bring her sweetened drink, often the same emetic drink, but sometimes other kinds. And after drinking, the languor filled her heavy limbs, her senses seemed to float in the air, listening, hearing. They had brought her a little female dog, which she called Flora. And once, in the trance of her senses, she felt she *heard* the little dog conceive, in her tiny womb, and begin to be complex, with young. And another day she could hear the vast sound of the earth going round, like some immense arrow-string booming.

But as the days grew shorter and colder, when she was cold, she would get a sudden revival of her will, and a desire to go out, to go away. And she insisted to the young man, she wanted to go out.

So one day, they let her climb to the topmost roof of the big house where she was, and look down the square. It was the day of the big dance, but not everybody was dancing. Women with babies in their arms stood in their doorways, watching. Opposite, at the other end of the square, there was a throng before the other big house, and a small, brilliant group on the terrace-roof of the first storey, in front of wide open doors of the upper storey. Through these wide open doors she could see fire glinting in darkness, and priests in headdresses of black and yellow and scarlet feathers, wearing robe-like blankets of black and red and yellow, with long green fringe, were moving about. A big drum was beating slowly and regularly, in the dense, Indian silence. The crowd below waited—

Then a drum started on a high beat, and there came the deep, powerful burst of men singing a heavy, savage music, like a wind roaring in some timeless forest, many mature men singing in one breath, like the wind; and long lines

of dancers walked out from under the big house. Men with naked, golden-bronze bodies and streaming black hair, tufts of red and yellow feathers on their arms, and kilts of white frieze with a bar of heavy red and black and green embroidery round their waists, bending slightly forward and stamping the earth in their absorbed, monotonous stamp of the dance, a fox-fur, hung by the nose from their belt behind, swaying with the sumptuous swaying of a beautiful fox-fur, the tip of the tail writhing above the dancer's heels. And after each man, a woman with a strange elaborate headdress of feathers and seashells, and wearing a short black tunic, moving erect, holding up tufts of feathers in each hand, swaying her wrists rhythmically and subtly beating the earth with her bare feet.

So, the long line of the dance unfurling from the big house opposite. And from the big house beneath her, strange scent of incense, strange tense silence, then the answering burst of inhuman male singing, and the long line of the dance unfurling.

It went on all day, the insistence of the drum, the cavernous, roaring, storm-like sound of male singing, the incessant swinging of the fox-skins behind the powerful, gold-bronze, stamping legs of the men, the autumn sun from a perfect blue heaven pouring on the rivers of black hair, men's and women's, the valley all still, the walls of rock beyond, the awful huge bulking of the mountain against the pure sky, its snow seething with sheer whiteness.

For hours and hours she watched, spell-bound, and as if drugged. And in all the terrible persistence of the drumming and the primeval, rushing deep singing, and the endless stamping of the dance of fox-tailed men, the tread of heavy, bird-erect women in their black tunics, she seemed at last to feel her own death; her own obliteration. As if she were to be obliterated from the field of life again. In the strange towering symbols on the heads of the

changeless, absorbed woman she seemed to read once more the *Mene Mene Tekel Upharsin*. Her kind of womanhood, intensely personal and individual, was to be obliterated again, and the great primeval symbols were to tower once more over the fallen individual independence of woman. The sharpness and the quivering nervous consciousness of the highly-bred white woman was to be destroyed again, womanhood was to be cast once more into the great stream of impersonal sex and impersonal passion. Strangely, as if clairvoyant, she saw the immense sacrifice prepared. And she went back to her little house in a trance of agony.

After this, there was always a certain agony when she heard the drums at evening, and the strange uplifted savage sound of men singing round the drum, like wild creatures howling to the invisible gods of the moon and the vanished sun. Something of the chuckling, sobbing cry of the coyote, something of the exultant bark of the fox, the far-off wild melancholy exultance of the howling wolf, the torment of the puma's scream, and the insistence of the ancient fierce human male, with his lapses of tenderness and his abiding ferocity.

Sometimes she would climb the high roof after nightfall, and listen to the dim cluster of young men round the drum on the bridge just beyond the square, singing by the hour. Sometimes there would be a fire, and in the fire-glow, men in their white shirts or naked save for a loin-cloth, would be dancing and stamping like spectres, hour after hour in the dark cold air, within the fire-glow, forever dancing and stamping like turkeys, or dropping squatting by the fire to rest, throwing their blankets round them.

'Why do you all have the same colours?' she asked the young Indian. 'Why do you all have red and yellow and black, over your white shirts? And the women have black tunics?'

He looked into her eyes, curiously, and the faint, evasive



smile came on to his face. Behind the smile lay a soft, strange malignancy.

'Because our men are the fire and the daytime, and our women are the spaces between the stars at night,' he said.

'Aren't the women even stars?' she said.

'No. We say they are the spaces between the stars, that keep the stars apart.'

He looked at her oddly, and again the touch of derision came into his eyes.

'White people,' he said, 'they know nothing. They are like children, always with toys. We know the sun, and we know the moon. And we say, when a white woman sacrifice herself to our gods, then our gods will begin to make the world again, and the white man's gods will fall to pieces.'

'How sacrifice herself?' she asked quickly.

And he, as quickly covered, covered himself with a subtle smile.

'She sacrifice her own gods and come to our gods, I mean that,' he said, soothingly.

But she was not reassured. An icy pang of fear and certainty was at her heart.

'The sun he is alive at one end of the sky,' he continued, 'and the moon lives at the other end. And the man all the time have to keep the sun happy in his side of the sky, and the woman have to keep the moon quiet at her side of the sky. All the time she have to work at this. And the sun can't ever go into the house of the moon, and the moon can't ever go into the house of the moon, in the sky. So the woman, she asks the moon to come into her cave, inside her. And the man, he draws the sun down till he has the power of the sun. All the time he do this. Then when the man gets a woman, the sun goes into the cave of the moon, and that is how everything in the world starts.'

She listened watching him closely, as one enemy watches another who is speaking with double meaning.

'Then,' she said, 'why aren't you Indians masters of the white men?'

'Because,' he said, 'the Indian got weak, and lost his power with the sun, so the white men stole the sun. But they can't keep him—they don't know how. They got him, but they don't know what to do with him, like a boy who catch a big grizzly bear, and can't kill him, and can't run away from him. The grizzly bear eats the boy that catch him, when he want to run away from him. White men don't know what they are doing with the sun, and white women don't know what they do with the moon. The moon she got angry with white women, like a puma when someone kills her little ones. The moon, she bites white women—here inside,' and he pressed his side. 'The moon, she is angry in a white woman's cave. The Indian can see it—And soon,' he added, 'the Indian women get the moon back and keep her quiet in their house. And the Indian men get the sun, and the power over all the world. White men don't know what the sun is. They never know.'

He subsided into a curious exultant silence.

'But,' she faltered, 'why do you hate us so? Why do you hate me?'

He looked up suddenly with a light on his face, and a startling flame of a smile.

'No, we don't hate,' he said softly, looking with a curious glitter into her face.

'You do,' she said, forlorn and hopeless.

And after a moment's silence, he rose and went away.

Winter had now come, in the high valley, with snow that melted in the day's sun, and nights that were bitter cold. She lived on, in a kind of daze, feeling her power ebbing more and more away from her, as if her will were leaving her. She felt always in the same relaxed, confused

victimised state, unless the sweetened herb drink would numb her mind altogether, and release her senses into a sort of heightened, mystic acuteness and a feeling as if she were diffusing out deliciously into the harmony of things. This at length became the only state of consciousness she really recognised: this exquisite sense of bleeding out into the higher beauty and harmony of things. Then she could actually hear the great stars in heaven, which she saw through her door, speaking from their motion and brightness, saying things perfectly to the cosmos, as they trod in perfect ripples, like bells on the floor of heaven, passing one another and grouping in the timeless dance, with the spaces of dark between. And she could hear the snow on a cold, cloudy day twittering and faintly whistling in the sky, like birds that flock and fly away in autumn, suddenly calling farewell to the invisible moon, and slipping out of the plains of the air, releasing peaceful warmth. She herself would call to the arrested snow to fall from the upper air. She would call to the unseen moon to cease to be angry, to make peace again with the unseen sun like a woman who ceases to be angry in her house. And she would smell the sweetness of the moon relaxing to the sun in the wintry heaven, when the snow fell in a faint, cold-perfumed relaxation, as the peace of the sun mingled again in a sort of unison with the peace of the moon.

She was aware too of the sort of shadow that was on the Indians of the valley, a deep, stoical disconsolation, almost religious in its depth.

'We have lost our power over the sun, and we are trying to get him back. But he is wild with us, and shy like a horse that has got away. We have to go through a lot.' So the young Indian said to her, looking into her eyes with a strained meaning. And she, as if bewitched, replied: 'I hope you will get him back.'

The smile of triumph flew over his face.

'Do you hope it?' he said.

'I do,' she answered, fatally.

'Then all right,' he said. 'We shall get him.'

And he went away in exultance.

She felt she was drifting on some consummation, which she had no will to avoid, yet which seemed heavy and finally terrible to her.

It must have been almost December, for the days were short, when she was taken again before the aged man, and stripped of her clothing, and touched with the old fingertips.

The aged cacique looked her in the eyes, with his eyes of lonely, far-off, black intentness, and murmured something to her.

'He wants you to make the sign of peace,' the young man translated, showing her the gesture. 'Peace and farewell to him.'

She was fascinated by the black, glass-like, intent eyes of the old cacique, that watched her without blinking, like a basilisk's, overpowering her. In their depths also she saw a certain fatherly compassion, and pleading. She put her hand before her face, in the required manner, making the sign of peace and farewell. He made the sign of peace back again to her, then sank among his furs. She thought he was going to die, and that he knew it.

There followed a day of ceremonial, when she was brought out before all the people, in a blue cloak with white fringe, and holding blue feathers in her hands. Before an altar of one house, she was perfumed with incense and sprinkled with ash. Before the altar of the opposite House she was fumigated again with incense by the gorgeous, terrifying priests in yellow and scarlet and black, their faces painted with scarlet paint. And then they threw water on her. Meanwhile she was faintly aware of the fire on the altar, the heavy, heavy sound of a drum, the heavy sound of men beginning powerfully, deeply, savagely

to sing, the swaying of the crowd of faces in the plaza below, and the formation for a sacred dance.

But at this time her commonplace consciousness was numb, she was aware of her immediate surroundings as shadows, almost immaterial. With refined and heightened senses she could hear the sound of the earth winging on its journey, like a shot arrow, the ripple-rustling of the air, and the boom of the great arrow-string. And it seemed to her there were two great influences in the upper air, one golden towards the sun, and one invisible silver; the first travelling like rain ascending to the gold presence sunwards, the second like rain silverily descending the ladders of space towards the hovering, lurking clouds over the snowy mountain-top. Then between them, another presence, waiting to shake himself free of moisture, of heavy white snow that had mysteriously collected about him. And in summer, like a scorched eagle, he would wait to shake himself clear of the weight of heavy sunbeams. And he was coloured like fire. And he was always shaking himself clear, of snow or of heavy heat, like an eagle rustling.

Then there was a still stranger presence, standing watching from the blue distance, always watching. Sometimes running in upon the wind, or shimmering in the heat-waves. The blue wind itself, rushing as it were out of the holes in the earth into the sky, rushing out of the sky down upon the earth. The blue wind, the go-between, the invisible ghost that belonged to two worlds, that played upon the ascending and the descending chords of the rains.

More and more her ordinary personal consciousness had left her, she had gone into that other state of passional cosmic consciousness, like one who is drugged. The Indians, with their heavily religious natures, had made her succumb to their vision.

Only one personal question she asked the young Indian:

‘Why am I the only one that wears blue?’

‘It is the colour of the wind. It is the colour of what goes away and is never coming back, but which is always here, waiting like death among us. It is the colour of the dead. And it is the colour that stands away off, looking at us from the distance, that cannot come near to us. When we go near, it goes further. It can’t be near. We are all brown and yellow and black hair, and white teeth and red blood. We are the ones that are here. You with blue eyes, you are the messengers from the far-away, you cannot stay, and now it is time for you to go back.’

‘Where to?’ she asked.

‘To the way-off things like the sun and the blue mother of rain, and tell them that we are the people on the world again, and we can bring the sun to the moon again, like a red horse to a blue mare; we are the people. The white women have driven back the moon in the sky, won’t let her come to the sun. So the sun is angry. And the Indian must give the moon to the sun.’

‘How?’ she said.

‘The white woman got to die and go like a wind to the sun, tell him the Indians will open the gate to him. And the Indian women will open the gate to the moon. The white woman don’t let the moon come down out of the blue corral. The moon used to come down among the Indian women, like a white goat among the flowers. And the sun want to come down to the Indian men, like an eagle to the pine-trees. The sun, he is shut out behind the white man, and the moon she is shut out behind the white woman, and they can’t get away. They are angry, everything in the world gets angrier. The Indian says, he will give the white woman to the sun, so the sun will leap over the white man and come to the Indian again. And the moon will be surprised, she will see the gate open, and she not know which way to go. But the Indian woman will call to the moon, *Come! Come! Come back into my grass-*

*lands. The wicked white woman can't harm you any more.* Then the sun will look over the heads of the white men, and see the moon in the pastures of our women, with the Red Men standing around like pine trees. Then he will leap over the heads of the white men, and come running past to the Indians through the spruce trees. And we, who are red and black and yellow, we who stay, we shall have the sun on our right hand and the moon on our left. So we can bring the rain down out of the blue meadows, and up out of the black; and we can call the wind that tells the corn to grow, when we ask him, and we shall make the clouds to break, and the sheep to have twin lambs. And we shall be full of power, like a spring day. But the white people will be a hard winter, without snow——'

'But,' said the white woman, 'I don't shut out the moon—how can I?'

'Yes,' he said, 'you shut the gate, and then laugh, think you have it all your own way.'

She could never quite understand the way he looked at her. He was always so curiously gentle, and his smile was so soft. Yet there was such a glitter in his eyes, and an unrelenting sort of hate came out of his words, a strange, profound, impersonal hate. Personally he liked her, she was sure. He was gentle with her, attracted by her in some strange, soft, passionless way. But impersonally he hated her with a mystic hatred. He would smile at her, winningly. Yet if, the next moment, she glanced round at him unawares, she would catch that gleam of pure after-hate in his eyes.

'Have I got to die and be given to the sun?' she asked.

'Sometime,' he said, laughing evasively. 'Sometime we all die.'

They were gentle with her, and very considerate with her. Strange men, the old priests and the young cacique alike, they watched over her and cared for her like women. In their soft, insidious understanding, there was something

womanly. Yet their eyes, with that strange glitter, and their dark, shut mouths that would open to the broad jaw, the small, strong, white teeth, had something very primitively male and cruel.

One wintry day, when snow was falling, they took her to a great dark chamber in the big House. The fire was burning in a corner on a high raised dais under a sort of hood or canopy of adobe-work. She saw in the fire-glow, the glowing bodies of the almost naked priests, and strange symbols on the roof and walls of the chamber. There was no door or window in the chamber, they had descended by a ladder from the roof. And the fire of pine-wood danced continually, showing walls painted with strange devices, which she could not understand, and a ceiling of poles making a curious pattern of black and red and yellow, and alcoves or niches in which were curious objects she could not discern.

The older priests were going through some ceremony near the fire, in silence, intense Indian silence. She was seated on a low projection of the wall, opposite the fire, two men seated beside her. Presently they gave her a drink from a cup, which she took gladly, because of the semitrance it would induce.

In the darkness and in the silence she was accurately aware of everything that happened to her: how they took off her clothes, and standing her before a great, weird device on the wall, coloured blue and white and black, washed her all over with water and the amole infusion; washed even her hair, softly, carefully, and dried it on white cloths, till it was soft and glistening. Then they laid her on a couch under another great indecipherable image of red and black and yellow, and now rubbed all her body with sweet-scented oil, and massaged all her limbs, and her back, and her sides, with a long, strange, hypnotic massage. Their dark hands were incredibly powerful, yet soft with a watery softness she could not understand. And



the dark faces, leaning near her white body, she saw were darkened with red pigment, with lines of yellow round the cheeks. And the dark eyes glittered absorbed, as the hands worked upon the soft white body of the woman.

They were so impersonal, absorbed in something that was beyond her. They never saw her as a personal woman: she could tell that. She was some mystic object to them, some vehicle of passions too remote for her to grasp. Herself in a state of trance, she watched their faces bending over her, dark, strangely glistening with the transparent red paint, and lined with bars of yellow. And in this weird, luminous-dark mask of living face, the eyes were fixed with an unchanging steadfast gleam, and the purplish-pigmented lips were closed in a full, sinister, sad grimness. The immense fundamental sadness, the grimness of ultimate decision, the fixity of revenge, and the nascent exultance of those that are going to triumph—these things she could read in their faces, as she lay and was rubbed into a misty glow, by their uncanny dark hands. Her limbs, her flesh, her very bones at last seemed to be diffusing into a roseate sort of mist, in which her consciousness hovered like some sun-gleam in a flushed cloud.

She knew the gleam would fade, the cloud would go grey. But at present she did not believe it. She knew she was a victim; that all this elaborate work upon her was the work of victimising her. But she did not mind. She wanted it.

Later, they put a short blue tunic on her and took her to the upper terrace, and presented her to the people. She saw the plaza below her full of dark faces and of glittering eyes. There was no pity: only the curious hard exultance. The people gave a subdued cry when they saw her, and she shuddered. But she hardly cared.

Next day was the last. She slept in a chamber of the big house. At dawn they put on her a big blue blanket with a fringe, and led her out into the plaza, among the

throng of silent, dark-blanketed people. There was pure white snow on the ground, and the dark people in their dark-brown blankets looked like inhabitants of another world.

A large drum was slowly pounding, and an old priest was declaring from a housetop. But it was not till noon that a litter came forth, and the people gave that low, animal cry which was so moving. In the sack-like litter sat the old, old cacique, his white hair braided with black braid and large turquoise stones. His face was like a piece of obsidian. He lifted his hand in token, and the litter stopped in front of her. Fixing her with his old eyes, he spoke to her for a few moments, in his hollow voice. No one translated.

Another litter came, and she was placed in it. Four priests moved ahead, in their scarlet and yellow and black, with plumed head-dresses. Then came the litter of the old cacique. Then the light drums began, and two groups of singers burst simultaneously into song, male and wild. And the golden-red, almost naked men, adorned with ceremonial feathers and kilts, the rivers of black hair down their backs, formed into two files and began to tread the dance. So they threaded out of the snowy plaza, in two long, sumptuous lines of dark red-gold and black and fur, swaying with a faint tinkle of bits of shell and flint, winding over the snow between the two bee-clusters of men who sang around the drum.

Slowly they moved out, and her litter, with its attendance of feathered, lurid, dancing priests, moved after. Everybody danced the tread of the dance-step, even, subtly, the litter-bearers. And out of the plaza they went, past smoking ovens, on the trail to the great cotton-wood trees, that stood like grey-silver lace against the blue sky, bare and exquisite above the snow. The river, diminished, rushed among fangs of ice. The chequer-squares of gardens within fences were all snowy, and the white houses now looked yellowish.

The whole valley glittered intolerably with pure snow, away to the walls of the standing rock. And across the flat cradle of snow-bed wound the long thread of the dance, shaking slowly and sumptuously in its orange and black motion. The high drums thudded quickly, and on the crystalline frozen air the swell and roar of the chant of savages was like an obsession.

She sat looking out of her litter with big, transfixed blue eyes, under which were the wan markings of her drugged weariness. She knew she was going to die, among the glisten of this snow, at the hands of this savage, sumptuous people. And as she stared at the blaze of blue sky above the slashed and ponderous mountain, she thought: 'I am dead already. What difference does it make, the transition from the dead I am to the dead I shall be, very soon!' Yet her soul sickened and felt wan.

The strange procession trailed on, in perpetual dance, slowly across the plain of snow, and then entered the slopes between the pine-trees. She saw the copper-dark men dancing the dance-tread, onwards, between the copper-pale tree trunks. And at last she too, in her swaying litter, entered the pine-trees.

They were travelling on and on, upwards, across the snow under the trees, past the superb shafts of pale, flaked copper, the rustle and shake and tread of the threading dance, penetrating into the forest, into the mountain. They were following a stream-bed: but the stream was dry, like summer, dried up by the frozenness of the headwaters. There were dark, red-bronze willow bushes with wattles like wild hair, and pallid aspen trees looking like cold flesh against the snow. Then jutting dark rocks.

At last she could tell that the dancers were moving forward no more. Nearer and nearer she came upon the drums, as to a lair of mysterious animals. Then through the bushes she emerged into a strange amphitheatre. Facing was a great wall of hollow rock, down the front of

which hung a great, dripping, fang-like spoke of ice. The ice came pouring over the rock from the precipice above, and then stood arrested, dripping out of high heaven, almost down to the hollow stones where the stream-pool should be below. But the pool was dry.

On either side the dry pool, the lines of dancers had formed, and the dance was continuing without intermission, against a background of bushes.

But what she felt was that fanged inverted pinnacle of ice, hanging from the lip of the dark precipice above. And behind the great rope of ice, she saw the leopard-like figures of priests climbing the hollow cliff face, to the cave that like a dark socket, bored a cavity, an orifice, half way up the crag.

Before she could realise, her litter-bearers were staggering in the footholds, climbing the rock. She too was behind the ice. There it hung, like a curtain that is not spread, but hangs like a great fang. And near above her was the orifice of the cave sinking dark into the rock. She watched it as she swayed upwards.

On the platform of the cave stood the priests, waiting in all their gorgeousness of feathers and fringed robes, watching her ascent. Two of them stooped to help her litter bearer. And at length she was on the platform of the cave, far in behind the shaft of ice, above the hollow amphitheatre among the bushes below, where men were dancing, and the whole populace of the village was clustered in silence.

The sun was sloping down the afternoon sky, on the left. She knew that this was the shortest day of the year, and the last day of her life. They stood her facing the iridescent column of ice, which fell down marvellously arrested, away in front of her.

Some signal was given, and the dance below stopped. There was now absolute silence. She was given a little to drink, then two priests took off her mantle and her

tunic, and in her strange pallor she stood there, between the lurid robes of the priests, beyond the pillar of ice, beyond and above the dark-faced people. The throng below gave the low, wild cry. Then the priests turned her round, so she stood with her back to the open world, her long blond hair to the people below. And they cried again.

She was facing the cave, inwards. A fire was burning and flickering in the depths. Four priests had taken off their robes, and were almost as naked as she was. They were powerful men in the prime of life, and they kept their dark, painted faces lowered.

From the fire came the old, old priest, with an incensepan. He was naked and in a state of barbaric ecstasy. He fumigated his victim, reciting at the same time in a hollow voice. Behind him came another robeless priest, with two flint knives.

When she was fumigated, they laid her on a large flat stone, the four powerful men holding her by the outstretched arms and legs. Behind stood the aged man, like a skeleton covered with dark glass, holding a knife and transfixedly watching the sun; and behind him again was another naked priest, with a knife.

She felt little sensation, though she knew all that was happening. Turning to the sky, she looked at the yellow sun. It was sinking. The shaft of ice was like a shadow between her and it. And she realised that the yellow rays were filling half the cave, though they had not reached the altar where the fire was, at the far end of the funnel-shaped cavity.

Yes, the rays were creeping round slowly. As they grew ruddier, they penetrated further. When the red sun was about to sink, he would shine full through the shaft of ice deep into the hollow of the cave, to the innermost.

She understood now that this was what the men were waiting for. Even those that held her down were bent and twisted round, their black eyes watching the sun with

a glittering eagerness, and awe, and craving. The black eyes of the aged cacique were fixed like black mirrors on the sun, as if sightless, yet containing some terrible answer to the reddening winter planet. And all the eyes of the priests were fixed and glittering on the sinking orb, in the reddening, icy silence of the winter afternoon.

They were anxious, terribly anxious, and fierce. Their ferocity wanted something, and they were waiting the moment. And their ferocity was ready to leap out into a mystic exultance, of triumph. But still they were anxious.

Only the eyes of that oldest man were not anxious. Black, and fixed, and as if sightless, they watched the sun, seeing beyond the sun. And in their black, empty concentration there was power, power intensely abstract and remote, but deep, deep to the heart of the earth, and the heart of the sun. In absolute motionless he watched till the red sun should send his ray through the column of ice. Then the old man would strike, and strike home, accomplish the sacrifice and achieve the power.

The mastery that man must hold, and that passes from race to race.

# SCANDALES

*Par* JEAN COCTEAU

## MESDEMOISELLES.

Qu'est-ce que le scandale volontaire? On pourrait le définir de la façon suivante:

Le scandale volontaire consiste à prendre exprès sa gauche dans un pays où tout le monde prend sa droite.

Et le scandale involontaire?

Le scandale involontaire c'est de bien prendre sa droite mais de dépasser les autres voitures à cause d'une fièvre juvénile ou d'une connaissance approfondie de la circulation.

Dans les deux cas le tapage qui en résulte est le même. Mais souvent, dans le second cas, il provoque chez le coupable une grande surprise—car tout à la force ou à l'adresse qu'il dépense, il ne remarquait point qu'il dérangeait.

Dans le premier cas, le scandale dure peu. La police arrive. Il faut obéir.

Vous voyez, toute la différence qui existe entre scandaliser spontanément ou chercher le scandale pour attirer l'attention sur soi.

Vous me direz: Soit, mais s'il est compréhensible qu'un homme, ou qu'une chapelle vide essaie de remuer l'opinion coûte que coûte, comment vous expliquerez-vous que la beauté, sa vitesse, son adresse, sa fougue provoquent le même scandale et qu'elle ne s'impose pas de force aux yeux de tous? L'explication est très simple: Elle dérange. Elle change les règles du jeu. Elle entre dans un cercle dont les membres somnolents jouaient depuis cinquante ans un jeu fort simple. Hop! Elle brouille les cartes et annonce les règles d'un jeu nouveau plus difficile et qui exige qu'on se réveille.

A peine le scandale apaisé, le nouveau jeu appris et

devenu la routine—hop! elle saute sur la table, déchire les cartes et annonce qu'il faut jouer à saute-moutons. Et ainsi de suite. Vous voyez qu'il n'y a que les membres jeunes d'esprit ou de corps qui suivent. Les autres regimbent. Ils se liguent contre cette impudente. Ils forment le gros du public—le gros de notre public et de tout le public à toutes les époques.

Vous ne voulez pas être de cette foule, n'est-ce pas, mesdemoiselles? vous ne rirez pas de la beauté neuve. Vous ne l'accablerez pas. Il suffit pour la reconnaître de regarder ses yeux, car la beauté change de robe et de coiffure, il lui en arrive même de traverser de charmants ridicules et comme vous-même, d'être difficile à reconnaître d'une mode à l'autre, mais son regard bleu ne change jamais. Il donne aux âmes dignes de l'affronter une nausée délicieuse, une sorte de choc qui peut prendre place entre le vertige de l'amour et de la mort.

Il n'existe de talisman pour la reconnaître, pas de signes extérieurs, sauf sa grande élégance. Je vous le répète—ce serait vous tromper que de vous faire entreprendre une longue promenade à travers le désordre moderne, et de vous dire: Ceci est bon, cela moins, cela est détestable—méfiez-vous du baroque, du pittoresque, de l'originalité trop visible qui peinturlure la vieille étoffe au lieu de changer la trame, etc. . . . etc. . . . J'aime mieux collaborer, dans une mesure modeste, à ouvrir en vous un certain angle d'esprit critique, à éveiller une certaine méfiance et un certain désir qui vous permettent d'identifier le beau sans aucun aide, par le flair, par le toucher, sous n'importe laquelle de ses transformations.

Grosso modo je vous expliquerai mon rôle et le rôle de qui j'aime dans l'étonnant mouvement de pensée contemporain. Il s'agit, après les excès d'une manière de romantisme, de barbarie, succédant comme toujours, par opposition aux grâces papillotantes et molles de l'impresionnisme, de recréer un ordre neuf, riche des enseigne-



ments de la décadence, de la Capoue impressionniste et des violences qui écrasèrent, et de refaire à notre esprit enrichi, secoué, brutalisé, un moule sage sans lequel la France n'a jamais pu vivre.

Mais vous devinez l'écueil. Il ne s'agit pas de retourner en arrière, de fuir le désordre en faisant le voyage d'Athènes, de lutter par des pastiches d'un calme ancien contre le tohubohu nouveau.

C'est une position extrêmement délicate et je me vante d'avoir inventé quelques équilibres pour se maintenir sur cette corde raide. Nous approchons de la terre ferme. La corde a déjà moins de ballant. Mais je ne me cache pas que je marche encore à mille pieds au dessus du vide. C'est sans doute ce qui me donne quelquefois un air d'acrobate. Avouez que la posture mérite qu'on ne m'accorde pas un coup d'œil distrait.

Un disciple de Maurras me dira: La beauté convainc d'emblée. Pourquoi votre beauté scandaliserait-elle? D'abord, elle scandalise de moins en moins, elle touche à la période où la raison et l'intensité s'équilibrent—Ensuite, lorsqu'elle scandalise, je saurai la défendre avec des armes d'helléniste.

Prenons le Théâtre.

Le public corrompu, flatté dans sa paresse par le boulevard est incapable de réagir aux extrêmes délicatesses ou bien aux extrêmes duretés dont le mélange composait le beau antique. Les délicatesses lui passent par dessus la tête, les duretés excitent son rire.

J'en ai fait la plus curieuse expérience en traduisant et montant *Antigone* chez Dullin. J'étais agacé par le machinisme d'avant-garde. J'avais voulu démontrer que la nouveauté ne consiste pas à parler de New-York et que n'importe quel chef-d'œuvre ancien pouvait reprendre une incroyable jeunesse entre les mains d'un artiste à qui les machines au lieu de l'éblouir comme un nègre, ont servi d'exemple. Il s'agissait d'ôter la matière morte à

quoi des siècles amènent toujours une partie des chefs-d'œuvre et sans dénaturer un seul mot, d'adapter *Antigone* au rythme contemporain. Notre vitesse, notre patience ne sont pas celle d'Athènes en 440 av. J.C. C'est donc fausser le sens de la tragédie que de la dérouler intacte devant des nerfs de 1923. C'est, je trouve, la servir que de lui restituer avec amour sa démarche vivante. Ainsi réduite, concentrée, décapée, l'œuvre brûle les petites stations et roule vers la catastrophe comme un express.

J'avais vu *Antigone*, jadis, à la Comédie Française. C'était incroyable d'ennui. L'âge d'*Antigone* rendait assez naturelle et pourtant fort peu touchante sa marche au tombeau. Des vieillards sous les barbes blanches de qui on devinait par contre de jeunes choristes chantaient des paroles inintelligibles sur la musique de Saint-Saëns. Voilà le vrai scandale.

J'ai évité l'écueil du chœur en réduisant le chœur et le chorrente à une seule personne invisible qui, par un porte-voix débouchant parmi un bouquet de masques de vieillards, de jeunes gens et de femmes, exprime l'opinion de Thèbes. Ainsi entendait-on, pour la première fois, chaque réplique de ce chœur versatile et opportuniste comme un journal quotidien.

J'avais choisi pour habiller mes princesses, Mlle. Chavel puisqu'elle est la couturière la plus élégante et que je n'imagine pas les filles d'Oedipe s'habillant chez une petite couturière. J'avais moi-même choisi de ces grosses laines d'Ecosse fort à la mode et Mlle. Chavel avec un instinct merveilleux dans l'emploi de cette matière retrouvait sans calcul des accoutrements si justes que *Le Correspondant* —revue très grave—consacra une longue étude à l'exactitude de ces costumes, entre nous, admirablement inexacts.

En face de Dullin, Tirésias—Mlle. Atanasiou, jeune grecque dont le nom signifie 'fille d'Immortels', et que je n'avais pas choisie pour cela mais à cause d'une noblesse rare chez les actrices, jouait, sans gestes sauf un lorsqu'elle va mourir, le plus beau rôle qui existe au théâtre.

Il est donc bien entendu que mon texte est un dessin à la plume d'après une toile de maître, qu'il n'en reste que l'essentiel, mais que cet essentiel c'est le texte de Sophocle sans aucune transformation.

Eh bien, mesdames, messieurs, j'ai honte à vous avouer que j'avais tendu un piège sans le savoir. Personne de cette fameuse élite qui compose les salles de répétitions générales, ne connaissait Sophocle. On imagina que c'était une paraphrase, que sais-je—et pour obtenir le sérieux, pour jouer dans le silence, il fallut attendre le public populaire de Montmartre dont la fraîcheur sentit ce que la prétention ne comprenait pas. Nous dépassâmes la 100<sup>e</sup>, ce qui n'est pas mal, avouez-le, avec une tragédie de Sophocle. Ce doit être à peu près le nombre de représentations à la Comédie-Française, depuis qu'on l'y donne.

Vous me direz que cette soi-disant élite est ce qui existe de plus vil à Paris. J'ai la tristesse de vous répondre que nous jouâmes un soir au Vieux-Colombier et que nous réentendîmes dans cette salle soigneusement, lentement éduquée par Copeau, les mêmes rires que ceux du public élégant.

Voulez-vous des exemples de ce qui faisait rire? Il y a dans *Antigone* une scène sublime. La reine Eurydice (qui paraît une minute) entend le messager raconter la mort de son fils. Elle s'arrête. Elle s'avance. Le chœur se demande si elle a entendu et elle dit, 'Laissez une petite chance au doute.' C'est à dire j'ai un peu entendu. . . . (Rires).

Le messager lui raconte la mort d'Hémon. Il est essoufflé. Il s'excite. Il la lui jette à la figure sans le moindre ménagement. C'est terrible.

La reine reçoit ce paquet de sang. Elle disparaît. Alors le chœur et le messager échangent un court dialogue, qui évoque le musique de Monteverdé.

Moi j'avais les larmes au yeux derrière la toile, car je jouais le chœur. Le public riait, riait de toutes ses forces.

J'eusse voulu le prévenir de son inconvenance, lui crier par le porte-voix: Ne riez pas. Ce n'est pas de Cocteau. C'est sublime, c'est de Sophocle. Ne vous dégradez pas. Mais que dire à des gens qui veulent entendre une farce et qui sous prétexte de Boeuf sur le toit et de jazz-band pensent voir Magic-City, devant l'Acropole. Ce qui leur sembla le plus cocasse fut l'illustre réponse d'Antigone sur les frontières. Ils la crurent une allusion internationaliste de moi. Voici cette scène. Vous verrez s'il y a de quoi rire. Les phrases sont hautes et pleines d'ombre, on dirait les cannelures autour d'une colonne des Prophylées.

On riait—on riait—on riait d'Antigone. On riait de Créon, on riait des dieux.

Je vous parle de quatre salles et j'excepte la première qui fut un triomphe. Il existe de ces mystères. Ensuite vinrent des salles respectueuses. Une fois lorsqu'Antigone marche au supplice, c'est nous qui faillîmes rire, car une femme du peuple dit tout haut: Oh! la pauvre petite!

J'avais imaginé de ramasser l'action comme le texte. Aussi les soldats faisaient-ils descendre Antigone par une trappe en bas de marches au premier plan. On n'imagine rien de plus déchirant que Mlle. Atanasiou à mi-corps dans cette trappe, les bras étendus, disparaissant et criant: 'Chefs thébains, on outrage votre dernière princesse!' Eh bien, les salles d'élite dont je vous parle se levaient pour regarder dans le trou, le texte immortel était couvert par un bruit de strapontins.

Vous voyez qu'on a fait Grèce synonyme de mou, de soyeux, de doucereux, de pompeux et que par un étrange quiproquo on prend pour des cocasseries de moi les angles divins, les ombres nettes et les vives couleurs du Parthénon. Car il ne faut jamais oublier que la Grèce bariolait ses temples et ses statues. Une vieille ruine, toute jeune, stupéfierait ses fidèles. Considérez mon travail. Je déblaye un terrain ruineux, je frotte, j'ôte la patine et la belle image neuve qui apparaît, blesse les regards malades. La patine

—m'écrivait Gide—c'est la récompense des chefs-d'œuvre.

Je ne peux le suivre. Car s'il est vrai que l'accumulation de colère, de respect, d'amour sur un chef-d'œuvre lui ajoute quelque chose, une récompense ne se distribue que parcimonieusement et la patine recouvre toutes les œuvres. Il serait donc plus juste de dire: La patine est le maquillage des croûtes.

C'est ainsi que dans *Parade*, en imaginant de transfigurer des gestes familiers, des gestes modernes, jusqu'au point où on ne les reconnaît plus et où ils deviennent danse, je renouvelais la tradition de danse grecque beaucoup mieux que les chorégraphes qui enchaînent aveuglément des poses prises sur les vases sans remonter à leur source. Mais je me laisse entraîner trop loin et je manque à ma promesse de légèreté. Je retourne aux anecdotes promises. Le scandale de *Parade* au Châtelet en 1917 fut immense. La pièce durait 20 minutes. Après les 15 minutes de drame dans la salle qui suivirent le baisser du rideau, des spectateurs en vinrent aux mains. Je traversais les couloirs avec Apollinaire pour rejoindre Picasso et Satie qui m'attendaient dans une loge lorsqu'une grosse chanteuse me reconnut. En voilà un, s'écria-t-elle ! Elle voulait dire un des criminels. Et elle se jeta sur moi pour me crever les yeux, en brandissant une épingle à chapeau.

Le mari de cette Bacchante et Guillaume Apollinaire eurent toutes les peines du monde à me sauver.

Après nous entendîmes, en haut, une phrase très drôle et qui équivalait au plus bel éloge. Un monsieur disait à un autre: ' Si j'avais su que c'était si bête j'aurais amené les enfants.' On dirait une légende de Forain. Ce monsieur ne se doutait pas que c'est justement le coup d'oeil enfantin qui manque au public moderne et qu'à force de vouloir qu'on le traite en grande personne, ce public ne supporte plus que l'ennui.

Trois ans après, la reprise de *Parade* fut un triomphe. Nous dûmes, Satie, Picasso et moi, revenir saluer après

12 rappels, au bord d'une loge. Ces mêmes personnes qui voulaient notre mort en 1917, en 1920 nous applaudissaient debout. Que s'était-il donc passé? Comment cette salle vaniteuse faisait-elle volte-face, reconnaissait-elle son erreur d'une façon si humble? Une dame en félicitant ma mère, m'en fournit l'explication: 'Ah! Madame,' s'écriait-elle, 'comme ils ont eu raison de changer tout!'

Ceci était l'excuse. La vraie raison était la suivante: L'orchestre de *Parade* est un retour à la simplicité, à la clarté. C'est là son vrai scandale. Je vous en parlerai tout à l'heure. En 1914 on hua avant d'entendre et nos juges prirent le tapage qu'ils faisaient pour la musique. En 1920 on écouta. On s'étonna de comprendre après si peu de temps une chose si difficile. On s'émerveillait de son intelligence. Le public s'applaudissait lui-même.

A vrai dire les salles s'habituent même si ce ne sont pas les mêmes spectateurs qui les remplissent.

Raymond Radiguet dont vous connaissez la vie miraculeuse et dont la mort me laisse seul au monde m'écrivait en 1919—il avait alors 16 ans: 'En entrant au théâtre chaque spectateur se dépouille au vestiaire de son individualité—c'est ce qu'exprime bien l'admirable formule "La tenue de soirée est de rigueur."'

Le premier scandale auquel j'ai assisté c'était celui du *Sacre du Printemps* en 1913. Ce soir—là reste pour toute la jeunesse du monde une grande date. Des nécessités d'ordre pratique, obligèrent Diaghilew à donner sous forme de gala une première qui ne s'adressait qu'aux artistes. Aussi, les artistes peuplaient-ils le théâtre des Champs-Élysées, serrés autour des loges de corbeilles pleines d'élégances.

Si je ferme les yeux, je revois la vieille et belle comtesse de Pourtalès. Toute rouge, son diadème de travers, agitant un éventail de plumes d'autruche, elle criait cette chose étonnante: 'Monsieur Astruc—(qu'y pouvait il?)—C'est la première fois depuis 60 ans qu'on ose se moquer de moi.'

L'excellente personne était sincère. Elle croyait ce chef-d'oeuvre fait, ces danseurs éduqués, ces 90 musiciens réunis pour lui jouer un mauvais tour.

Vous savez que *Le Sacre* est aujourd'hui classique et quel accueil triomphal on fit en Juin 1923 aux N O C E S, à la Gaîté. Des difficultés d'ordre matériel obligèrent les russes à ne représenter les NOCES que sept ans après qu'elles furent écrites. C'est donc une soeur jumelle du *Sacre* que le public applaudissait. Même puissance, même secousse, même rythme irrésistible. Mais, en 1921, à l'Opéra, le public accueillit mal la dernière oeuvre du maître: *Mavra*. C'était trop simple, trop naïf. Le public ne fait jamais crédit à personne. Ce n'est jamais lui qui se trompe, c'est l'auteur. Une formule de Stravinsky était adoptée. Qu'il ne change plus. S'il change, s'il se renouvelle, on le boude. Cette fois le scandale s'exprima par le silence. L'oeuvre était trop 'agréable' pour qu'on sifflât. Fort bien, on se tairait. On exprimerait ainsi son mécontentement.

Il est probable que les scandales doivent progresser. Ils finiront par des bombes.\* Je suppose que le fameux scandale d'*Hernani* devait être pâle au regard des scandales du *Sacre*, de *Parade* et même de *Pelléas et Mélisande*. Le grand-oncle de mes amis Jacques et Pierre de Lacretelle assistait au scandale d'*Hernani*. Lorsqu'on lui demandait des détails, il répondait: 'Mais non. Je vous assure. Il ne se passait rien. Le public était très calme, on applaudissait beaucoup.'

Avec la séance où je montai en compagnie de Darius Milhaud, de Raoul Dufy et des clowns Fratellini *Le Bœuf sur le Toit*, j'évitai le scandale. Je n'en voulais à aucun prix. Le scandale est très vivant, mais il dérange les artistes, comme l'orchestre, et empêche les quelques

\* J'écrivais une sottise—le scandale consistant aujourd'hui à ne plus faire scandale—le public exprime son mécontentement par le silence ou les applaudissements.

personnes sérieuses de voir les mille nuances d'un travail acharné de plusieurs mois. Je l'évitai en apparaissant devant le rideau et en prononçant quelques paroles qui rendaient le public mon complice. S'il sifflait, il se sifflait; il ne broncha pas.

Le scandale provoque chaque fois en moi une stupeur. Je le redoute par habitude, mais je n'y crois pas. Je pense naïvement que l'atmosphère laborieuse, que les nuits blanches passées à peindre, à coudre, à répéter, que le coeur qui se prodigue et anime le moindre détail, que les dépenses du Directeur, la peine des artistes, de l'orchestre et du chef d'orchestre, sont évidents, contagieux et imposeront le respect.

J'oublie que pour la salle rien de cela n'existe, qu'elle voit simplement une rupture d'équilibre entre ses habitudes et ce qu'on lui présente—et qu'elle rit cruellement de cette rupture d'équilibre comme elle rit lorsqu'une dame tombe en descendant d'autobus.

'C'est une farce d'atelier,' disent les critiques après ces spectacles d'une mise au point éreintante.

Pour les *Mariés de la Tour Eiffel* mon plaisir de metteur-en-scène avait été si vif malgré la fatigue et si gaie la collaboration nombreuse où je réunissais Irène Lagrit pour le décor, Jean Victor Hugo pour les costumes et pour la musique le groupe dit groupe des Six; en réalité groupe de cinq, et pour le reste du spectacle, la troupe suédoise, Marcel Herrand et Pierre Bertin, mon plaisir dis-je avait été vif et cette collaboration si amicale, que j'étais à mille lieues d'attendre le scandale qui éclata fidèlement.

J'oubliais que le réalisme du théâtre du boulevard qui consiste à mettre de vrais meubles, de vraies portes, de vraies histoires, de vraies larmes etc. sur scène a flatté la paresse du public et habitué son esprit à ne plus jamais parcourir le chemin entre un objet, un sentiment réel et leur figuration. Ce public est donc aussi plus exercé que



possible à comprendre un réalisme supérieur, ce plus vrai que le vrai—dont j'ai fait ma méthode.

N'allez pas croire que j'invente quoi que ce soit. Shakspeare et Molière sont des maîtres qui méritent qu'on les suive. Voyez comme chez eux tout est plus gros ou plus net que le vrai, comme ils savent mettre une loupe entre la scène et le parterre. Souvent j'ai vu qu'on s'étonnait, en étudiant mon théâtre, qu'un poète dirigeât ces recherches vers le bouffe. On se trompe. Je cherche à remplir la scène au lieu de chercher à remplir la salle. Je cherche à rendre au théâtre ses titres de noblesse. Peu m'importe si mon effort qui porte sur des questions de volumes, d'échelles, de simplifications et de grossissements est à base comique ou tragique. Mon seul souci est de remplacer la poésie au théâtre par une poésie de théâtre. C'est juste l'inverse. Poésie au théâtre revient à présenter une fine dentelle à distance. Poésie de théâtre serait une guipure en câble, une grosse finesse qui se puisse voir de loin.

J'ai donc tout avantage à diriger mes recherches dans un sens bouffe. Car alors les rires ne me dérangent pas trop, même, s'ils sont décrochés par malentendu. Dans une tragédie ils me dérangeraient par contre beaucoup et c'est ce qui advint pour *Antigone* où je m'essayais dans le genre, en croyant me mettre en garde contre les gêneurs grâce à l'autorité de Sophocle. Vous avez vu que, contre le gêneur, aucune autorité ne prévaut. J'avoue cependant avoir obtenu des résultats extraordinaires avec *Romeo et Juliette*.

En sortant d'une représentation des *Mariés* auquel le véritable public réserve toujours un excellent accueil, un de mes amis entendit une dame couverte de perles et de plumes dire à une autre: 'Je ne sais comment vous demander pardon de vous avoir fait perdre votre soirée. Mais, au fond, c'est toujours curieux de voir jusqu'où peut aller la bêtise.'

Elle ne croyait pas si bien dire. Un autre soir j'avais couru dans la salle me rendre compte d'un détail changé

dans la dernière scène, car il est bien rare que je quitte le plateau pendant qu'on me joue. J'estime que c'est le rôle du capitaine à son bord. J'étais dans une loge. Dans la loge voisine une jeune femme à qui on me désigna voulut me cracher au visage. La charmante colère qui l'étranglait l'en empêcha. Elle pleurait de ne pouvoir cracher. Son mari la tirait par sa robe et me faisait derrière elle toute une pantomime d'excuses. Je dus dire à cette jolie personne que c'était fou de se mettre dans un état pareil. Cette jeune femme était la victime de Fifi, de Dédé et de Ta bouche.

Soyez certains que si Molière n'était pas Molière, elle chercherait dans la salle afin de lui cracher dessus, un auteur assez ignoble pour parler de purges et mêler du ballet à des comédies.

Mesdemoiselles, si je me limite, si je ne vous parle que de théâtre, c'est que le scandale causé par les livres éclate en silence. Son analyse entraînerait trop loin. Il nous faudrait prendre un autre rendezvous.

Je suis d'ailleurs fort mal documenté sur mon propre compte. En effet, après la presse de *Parade* en 1917, 18, je me désabonnai à *l'Argus*. Les injures s'épalaient comme l'huile sur un buvard. J'en recevais de Chine et d'Afrique. Maintenant je ne connais ma température que par les témoignages de haine ou d'amitié trop vifs pour que je les ignore et parmi lesquels je range, entre autres, l'invitation qui me valut l'honneur de prendre la parole devant vous.

Il y a encore un scandale dont il faut que je me lave. c'est celui de Jazz-Band. Un mot va vite. On m'en a beaucoup voulu de m'intéresser au Jazz-Band et d'en jouer moi-même. Remarquez que c'est un sport comme un autre. Quand j'étais petit, Sivori, Sarasate, fréquentaient chez mon grand-père à la campagne. Mon grand-père adorait le violon, il en avait de superbes dans une vitrine tapissée de peluche bleu de ciel. Chaque dimanche arrivait Sarasate, Sivori et des camarades. On arrangeait un quatuor. Sivori était nain. On l'asseyait sur des partitions.

Il refusait de s'asseoir sur Beethoven. Sarasate venait à cheval et son cheval buvait du vin chaud et des carottes. D'un thème à F nos virtuoses raclait en mesure et la musique ressemblait plus à du canotage, à de la course à pied qu'à de la musique. Ils comptaient et transpiraient, l'oeil tendu vers le pupitre. Je me souviens que chaque fois que ma grand'mère quittait son ouvrage et pour sortir traversait le salon sur la pointe des pieds, Sivori sans cesser de jouer se décollait de sa chaise, s'inclinait et se rasseyait.

Je vous jure que ma manie du Jazz-Band était aussi parfaitement innocente. J'en jouais sur un appareil acheté par Stravinsky, appareil qui eut l'honneur de servir à l'orchestration des NOCES. Je jouais avec Darius Milhaud, avec Marcelle Meyer, Wiener et un nègre délicieux, vrai démon de l'harmonie, appelé Vance. Paul Morand lui disait : 'Vance, La nuit c'est le jour de nègres, jouez encore.' Nous nous réunissions dans un petit bar, rue Duphot, parce que Wiener y tenait le piano pour des raisons très nobles dont il me voudrait de parler ici. Ces plaisirs innocents lancèrent le bar. Il devint notre quartier général. Il valait bien les cafés de l'époque Verlaine. Comme il débordait nos cher L. Moysès, le propriétaire, dut prendre un local plus vaste et nous demanda la permission de l'appeler 'Le Boeuf sur le Toit.' Voilà là vérité sur un autre scandale et ce qui fit dire que je tenais un bar. C'est la faute du Jazz-Band que j'aimais comme on aime un violon d'Ingres. Naturellement, une fois la porte grande ouverte au public, je ne jouai plus. Le public ne voyait dans la musique américaine que des épices et qu'un tohu-bohu informe. Or si la mélancolie nègre et les israélites russes, compositeurs de beaucoup de ces musiques à New York, nous envoyaient du nouveau monde un romantisme dangereux, il y avait d'autre part dans leur rythme et leur science des syncopes et de l'effet instrumental, une leçon qu'il fallait entendre.

# VIEWS AND VALUATIONS OF ANCIENT ART SINCE WINCKELMANN

By PAUL JACOBSTAL

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## II.

FROM a different point of departure the struggle against Impressionism and its view of art is taken up by Adolf v. Hildebrand in his *Problem der Form*. His book is a distillate and explanatory thesis dealing with his own productions and those of his painter friend, Hans v. Marees, and deepened by the teaching of Konrad Fiedler<sup>1</sup>.

For Impressionism the relationship between nature and art was quite an accidental one. A work of art was a *coin de la nature vu à travers un tempérament*, the creation of an *individuality*, the document of an art desire (*Kunstwollen*), a view which can be traced through Romanticism to its roots in Kant's *Art of the genius* (Critique of the power of judgment, § 46)<sup>2</sup>. As opposed to this view, plastic art, according to Hildebrand—who attained to his outlook as a creative sculptor, and confines himself in the main to this branch—is a fashioning of spatial reality, which takes place according to categories deeply conforming to law (*nach tiefgesetzlichen Kategorien*). The work of art is related

<sup>1</sup> *Der Ursprung der künstlerischen Tätigkeit* (1887).

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Beenken. *Festschrift H. Woelfflin*, p. 91.

to nature as a cosmos is to chaos, thus acquiring a new dignity and objectivity. The centre of gravity and the direction of the artist's feeling of self thus undergo a displacement. He is no longer ennobled by the pride of personal performance born of his 'individuality,' but by the consciousness of creating in the service of an absolute, of being the instrument of a superpersonal power speaking through him. Thus all art appears for the first time beside and above nature with a new justification. While in the Greek doctrine of mimesis, as well as in Riegl's theory, the ultimate relationship of art to nature remained undefined, here for the first time the idea of categorical knowledge of the external world, which originated in German Idealism, is applied to the process of creative art. In conformity with the classicist tenor of his sculpture Hildebrand is oriented in the antique, *viz.*, the archaic and classic periods, for an exhibition of the categories according to which the purification (*Klärung*) of reality takes place in the plastic production. His intuitions of the forms of Being and Doing (*Daseinsform und Wirkungsform*, *i.e.* of the transformations of spatial nature in the plastic creative process according to essential law), of the requirement of a single aspect in round sculpture<sup>3</sup>, of the quite special relationship of Greek reliefs to full statuary, which have been gained in the practice of his own work and have been put to the test on Greek sculpture from a historical viewpoint, have become an important common possession of modern archæology. The classicist range of these views, strongly illuminated by the fact that the Apoxyomenos of Lysippos is as incommensurable with Hildebrand's laws as Gothic, Rodin or Maillol, is com-

<sup>3</sup> I think it more than questionable whether Hamann, *Der Impressionismus in Leben und Kunst*, p. 31, is right in ascribing the rôle which Hildebrand gives to the distant image in the conception of the plastic production, and also his requirement of a *single* aspect united as far as possible in one plane, to an impressionistic trait in Hildebrand's thought.

paratively unimportant, for the single laws with limited validity do not seem to be the abiding element in Hildebrand's ideas, but the recognition of the categorical determinateness of artistic conception of form. The relation of Hildebrand's postulates to craftsmanship has been thought out by Hans Cornelius<sup>4</sup>. That, in view of the one-sidedness of this classicist canon an effort making for freedom of vision and—it would appear to those unprejudiced by art-historical dogmas—an unobjectionable or even positively valuable applied art, as, for example, Rococo or even Greek style, should be again regarded as a *breach*, is negligible when compared with the educational value and necessity and the tendencies of the book, which fought against the truly ghastly degradation of taste and the glaring lack of style in the craftsman's art of the age of Impressionism.

Independently of Hildebrand and Lange, and to some extent before them, and at a time when the chief concern was for the history of artists, Emanuel Loewy had investigated the laws underlying the process of nature reproduction in Greek art, and, coming as an archæologist from the wealth of material, he had likewise penetrated in every direction to general clearness of principles. The importance of his results is but little impaired by the method being based upon a bygone psychology.

As a final example the leader of the living representatives of German 'science of art', Heinrich Wölfflin, may be referred to. He belongs with Riegl and Hildebrand in that his eye is also directed towards conformities to law (*Gesetzmässigkeiten*) and to clarification of ideas on the phenomena of style. Before him the terms Baroque, classic art, were vague designations of periods, labels for practical use half dependent on feeling. He has transformed them into sharply defined notions of style; he has demonstrated in the progress of modern art since the Renaissance the

<sup>4</sup> *Elementargesetze der bildenden Kunst* (1908).

law of a necessary succession of styles, and in his *Grundbegriffen* he has worked out the changes according to law (*gesetzlichen*) of the forms of vision. Since testing the criteria he had gained from a study of the Secento Baroque upon the antique Baroque architecture dealt with in his own earlier work on the Roman triumphal arches, archæologists such as v. Salis have written the history of the entire Græco-Roman art according to his method, but with a still more precise elaboration of its phases and problems. His methods have even been influential beyond the sphere of sculpture, for example, for the precise characterization of literary styles. But more essential than the teachable and transmissible *substance* of Woelfflin's work is perhaps the 'how' of its performance. In comparing Woelfflin with Riegl one has the irresistible impression that owing to inborn visuo-sensibility, and also to being in the school tradition of Jacob Burckhardt, he is protected against Riegl's, so to say, deductive method, in which the individual work of art fulfils no further function than that of 'illustration' to axiomatically-coloured, long-range theories—a situation which is here somewhat strongly put, and, as is often the case, is more visible in Riegl's disciples than in the master himself. As compared with the German type of art philosophy of Hegelian abstractness, represented by Riegl in its purest and most important form, of which the depth and self-consistency must be admired, Woelfflin appears to us more representative of a Western, European trend, with a fine balance between sensibility and power of abstraction, with harmoniously and equably developed organs for both the unique and the universal in the work of art<sup>5</sup>.

We now turn our attention from the valuing subject to the object and the changes in its valuation.

Classicism is concerned with *the* Antique, particularly

<sup>5</sup> Cf. E. Heidrich. *Beiträge zur Geschichte und Methode der Kunstgeschichte* (1917).

where it is not a matter of historical knowledge, but of effect. In Winckelmann's attitude to ancient art there are two tendencies. First, the desire of a pre-eminently historical mind for knowledge concerning the historical development. From the statues contained in the Roman museums, and with as yet no knowledge of the originals, which the nineteenth century brought, and still greatly dependent upon the information derived from the ancients—from the art history compiled by the writers of the Empire—he divined the periods of the severe, grand and beautiful style. On the other hand, out of the antithesis of his own life-feeling towards modernity he visualized the antique as a unity; and even in the historical representation, where his survey searched for differentiation, this gave rise in him to a counter-current, the influence of which was unifying and uniting; so that, owing to a still untrained vision and that strong feeling of contrast for all antiques against the background of Baroque and Rococo, statues such as the Laocoon, the Belvedere torso—which to our knowledge are at once antique Baroque works, and to our feeling<sup>6</sup> are nearer to Michelangelo than to any works of the classical style—or the Niobids (a creation of the fourth century B.C.), ranged themselves for him close to Phidias; indeed, the Niobe even served to illustrate the style of Phidias.

In the classicist art heralded by Winckelmann the antique operates throughout as a unity, as already mentioned; much more so, for instance, than the Greek art which provided the norm for the Classicism of the Empire. What antique there exists behind the works of Thorwaldsen, Canova, David, or Flaxman is a style abstracted from the totality of the Roman museum-antiques, with all the flatness and generality that usually cling to such distillates and, to our infinitely sharpened feeling and understanding, with an insulting mixture of ingredients

<sup>6</sup> Thus Taine (1864). *Voyage en Italie*, I, 8, p. 153.



separated from each other by centuries. But the extent of consolidation of this style, deeply rooted in the ethical and æsthetical ideals of the period, is best shown by the lack of practical effect of the Elgin marbles and the æginetans at the time of their discovery about the year 1810. What a contrast between the praise bestowed by Canova and other artists on the Elgin marbles and their own sculpture! And what availed the sculptor Martin Wagner's refined and understanding appreciation of the Æginetans<sup>7</sup> when Thorwaldsen's Spes—a transposition of a Kore from the Æginetan pediment acroter into the style of the archaizing art of the Empire in which he was more conversant—attests that of the whole complex of the Æginetan sculptures it was precisely this figure—which, with the exception of the Athena of the pediment, is the only one that exhibits in the drapery and attitude traits of the mannerism of overripe archaism—that incited to imitation; and not the healthy, robust and active life of the warriors in the pediments? The explanation of these apparent contradictions lies just in the completely non-sensuous, inartistic relationship of that epoch, so difficult for us to understand, towards ancient art. Even for sculptors and painters—and, e.g., Ingres was certainly not wanting in 'sensitivity'—by being Greek a Greek statue was, until later, protected from being inspected for its 'style', or even 'quality'. Not until the antique as a whole no longer possessed any extra-artistic significance, had been divested of its ideality, could its phases and the individual works attain to special effectiveness. But this moment had not yet approached. For until the seventies little change took place outwardly; the contemporaries were unaware how the judgments which continued chiming in Winckelmann's language became more and more unfelt and conventional. And in the centre of admiration and estimation

<sup>7</sup> Joh. Martin Wagner. *Bericht über die Aeginetischen Bildwerke, mit Anmerkungen von Fr. W. J. Schelling* (1857).

uncontested, after the voices of the envious, such as Payne-Knight's, had been rapidly silenced, the Parthenon sculptures now stood—the realization of Winckelmann's divined 'high style'<sup>8</sup>.

The last quarter of the nineteenth century is the period of greatest distance from ancient art. If a history of Greek art had been written in the nineties by an impressionist historian—this was not done, but from remembered studio conversations it can very well be imagined, and additional items are to be found in Weissbach's *History of Impressionism*<sup>9</sup>—the following works would probably have stood at the peaks of a very jagged curve. Cretan ceramics (considered 'Japanesey' at the time), a few plastics of the maturest and most cunning archaism, perhaps this or that piece of Hellenistic work of a picturesque trend, certainly a few boldly-drawn still-lives of Pompejan walls, the lobster mosaics of Palestrina with their subdued tones; possibly also the most broadly-painted mummy portraits from the Fayum.

In the new century, with the turn towards style becoming visible in Cézanne, Marées, Hodler, there followed a renewed return to the antique, and a new evaluation of the antique phases which was complicated by the disunity of the living art. But already at the end of the eighties, when the mature archaic plastic art of the Acropolis came

<sup>8</sup> Typical again that occasional dissent should come from France. Delacroix, in his diary for 1850: 'When in Bordeaux five years ago I found the Parthenon everywhere. Barracks, churches, fountains—everything has something from it. Among the painters the sculpture of Phidias enjoys the same honour. One may not even talk to them of Roman antique or of the Greek before or after Phidias.' Also Stendhal and Taine make no secret of their dislike of the statues praised and valued as canonical, and confess that they feel more strongly attracted by the characterology of Roman portraits (in which, for the rest, Taine's inappreciation of the post-Antoine 'abstractive' style characterizes the range of the generation).

<sup>9</sup> W. Weissbach. *Impressionismus. Ein Problem der Malerei in der Antike und Neuzeit* (1910).

to be known, receptive sculptors and archæologists were indeed struck by the unheard-of sensibility of the hands, feet, and some of the animal sculptures. The accent now went from the naturalistically-pitched mature, to the strict Archaism of the early sixth century, and consistently beyond this to the art of Egypt, which now appeared in an entirely new light<sup>1</sup>.

This turning to Mediterranean early art was borne on a primitivistic current which, on the principle that severe diseases require severe remedies, was no longer satisfied, as Romanticism was, with the Primitives of our nearest sphere of culture, the *pious Middle Ages*, the Quattrocento; or, like Gauguin still was, only with the fulfilment on exotic islands of the altogether European longings for beautiful monumentality; but it resolutely affirmed the art of the Negroes and South Sea Islanders down to the very last item. This current is the correlation of a non-naturalistic art, seeking ultimate and simplest form, that imagines an affinity with the pictures of Greek geometrical vases (whose style now for the first time receives a positive valuation), with the art of the child, and with Barbarian sculpture. Another feeling, the roots of which go deeper, is one that might be designated as *tedium vitæ*—negation of the European spirit and intellectual culture in general. Where this standpoint appears quite as a principle, as in certain deliberate artists, or has appeared—even in Germany the culminating point has probably been passed—there is no longer any adjustment with the

<sup>1</sup> An attractive exercise, it may be said in passing, would be an enquiry into the influences of Egyptian art upon that of the nineteenth century. First, into the quite outward influences in the arts and crafts of the Empire, not much more eloquent than the corresponding decoration à l'égyptienne in Greek Hellenism or the Rococo *chinoiseries*; then, as second phase, the Romantic interpretation—Schinkel's decorations to *The Magic Flute*, Hall of the Berlin Egyptian Museum; and finally, an effect of the essential, 'crystalline, *kat'exochen* (sic),' that induced the Greeks to go to the school of the Egyptians in the time of Solon and Thales 2500 years ago.

antique, and as little with Gothic and nineteenth century painting; for at this angle of vision these styles, so different among themselves, become united as the expression of an unspiritual, visual art which clings to the appearance of things. Where, on the other hand, we are concerned with a compromising form of this view, such as in a science of art working with latent, expressionistic values, then a curve is implied the direction of which is opposed to the classical and classicist curves. For that curve in which the nearness to nature and to life is the measure, then acme and blossom means the art represented by Phidias and Praxiteles; rise and bud that of mature Archaism, death and winter the *frozen* late antique. Here, on the contrary, the development of ancient art is a gradual decline from the height of original monumentality and crystalline severity, as is incorporated absolutely in Babylonian-Sumerian art, in extensive stretches of the Egyptian, and to a limited extent in the early archaic Greek art. The fall and the greatest crisis appear in the mature Greek Archaism—the most tremendous naturalistic revolution that has ever occurred. Late antique, again, signifies an ascent after long decay. In speaking here of a curve it should be noted that no end-directed development, goal or highest point is assumed in the same sense as there, but that the curve which is here in question represents simply a series of connected points, without any dynamic tendency, which denote the values preferred, and the non-values (*Unwerte*) rejected, by the taste of the time.

We return to the judgments of archaic Greek art in the nineteenth century. On the one hand we saw a backward displacement of the centre of value towards the earlier Archaism. On the other hand we perceive a change in the opposite direction towards the earlier classic art, beginning at the lower limit of Archaism, and continuing and reviving certain tendencies of the earlier Archaism and mature classic art. This art stage is represented, to name well-

known examples, by the Delphian Charioteer, the Boston and Ludovisian throne reliefs, the Olympia sculptures, which, at the time of their discovery about the year 1880, appeared crude and provincial to that generation, and eclipsed by the Hermes of Praxiteles. Seen from the viewpoint of classic art this indicates a displacement of the accent similar to that in the judgment of classic literature. At the present day the Parthenon sculptures and Sophocles, to say nothing of Euripides, have a smaller circle of appreciative admirers than Olympia, Pindar and Æschylus.

Shortly summarizing the application to the present day, we find that in accordance with the totally disintegrated situation of the living art, and the absence of a uniform style of the time, the judgments and valuations of the antique exemplified in the strata of styles of the past forty years are interstratified. Of positive value, thanks to this total situation, is the presence of a most highly differentiated capacity for appreciative pleasure in all the phases of style, including the most contrary, in ancient art. Equally noticeable is the negative aspect; also in this sphere *tout comprendre* is wanting in the intensity of genuine love of art such as in Classicism was the foundation for the relationship to the antique. The will shown in Classicism towards an interest in the Greek world does not extend beyond a more or less intense *relish* for particular works. The life-feeling of the present day impels in another direction. Against this reality, which, after all, regulates the effective possibilities of bygone culture and art, it would be useless to strive; and at the present moment it would be labour lost to further a new humanism for larger circles of culture in Germany. It must suffice that a few live by Greek art and that the rarely-flowering precious plant be carefully nurtured and handed down to successors, who may care to witness the blossom.

# THE LAST FIRST NIGHT

By ADA LEVERSON

ON Valentine's day, the 14th February, 1895, there was a snowstorm more severe than had been remembered in London for years. A black, bitter, threatening wind blew the drifting snow. On the dark, sinister winter's night, when the first representation of *The Importance of Being Earnest* was produced at the St. James's Theatre, it was with difficulty that one drove there at all, and one had to go very slowly on account of the horses. Crowds of hansoms, smart broughams, carriages of all kinds blocked Little King Street.

When at last we took refuge in the playhouse, how grateful was the contrast! Outside, a *frost*; inside the very breath of success; perfumed atmosphere, of gaiety, fashion and, apparently, everlasting popularity. The author of the play was fertile, inventive, brilliant and with such encouragement how could one realise his gaiety was not to last? That his life was to become dark, cold, sinister as the outside evening.

Perfumed, for had not the word gone forth from Oscar that the lily of the valley was to be the flower of the evening as a souvenir of an absent friend? Flowers meant much in those days, and nearly all the pretty women wore sprays of lilies against their large puffed sleeves, while rows and rows of young elegants had buttonholes of the delicate bloom of lilies of the valley. Most of the smart young men held tall canes of ebony with ivory tops; they wore white gloves with rows of black stitching and very pointed shoes.

It was a distinguished audience such as is rarely seen nowadays, either at the Opera or even at a first night of a Revue. The street just outside was crowded, not only

with the conveyances and the usual crowd of waiting people, but with other Wilde fanatics who appeared to regard the arrivals as part of the performance; many of them shouted and cheered the best-known people; and the loudest cheers were for the author, who was as well-known as the Bank of England, as he got out of his carriage with his pretty wife, who afterwards joined friends, when the author himself went behind the scenes.

What a rippling, glittering, chattering crowd was that. They were certain of some amusement for, if, by exception, they did not care for the play, was not Oscar himself sure to do something to amuse them? Would he perhaps walk on after the play smoking a cigarette, with a green carnation blooming in his coat, and saying, in his slow way, with a slight smile (emphasizing certain words in the tradition of Swinburne) 'The play is delightful, I've enjoyed myself *so* much.' Or, as on another occasion, would he bow from a box and state in clear tones, heard all over the theatre, that Mr. Wilde was not in the house.

If he played to the Gallery, he got the Stalls.

There had been rumours for weeks that at Worthing Oscar was writing a farce, and how each day he wrote a part of it and each evening he read it to the Elect, his wife, children and a few friends. He himself said it was a delicate bubble of fancy, but in truth he cared little for any of his plays excepting only *Salomé*.

Influenced as he had been at the time by Maeterlinck, Flaubert and Huysmans, yet *Salomé* expressed *himself* in his innate love of the gorgeous and the unique. He said it was indeed unique, for it was written by an Irishman in French and done into English by a young Scotch friend. . . .!

But to return to the first night—to be the last——

For months before Lewis Waller had been tender and manly in *The Ideal Husband*, Sir George Alexander superb as *Lord Windermere* and Beerbohm Tree had been elegant, witty and amusing in the favourite *Woman*

*of no Importance.* Oscar was, therefore, no novice, but he had not yet written a farce.

Everyone was repeating his 'mots'. Society at the moment was enthusiastic about that rarest of human creatures, a celebrity with good manners.

It is really difficult to convey now in words the strange popularity, the craze there was at this moment for the subject of my essay; 'To meet Mr. Oscar Wilde' was put on the most exclusive of invitation cards. And every omnibus-conductor knew his latest jokes. If Caviare to the general, he was Gentleman's relish to the particular. He adored amusing the mob and annoying the burgess and fascinating the aristocrat.

With his extraordinary high spirits and love of fun he appealed to the lower class; his higher gifts enchanted the artistic and such of the great world as love to amuse themselves, indeed with sincere artists he was most himself. But the lower middle-class never liked him, always distrusted him and disliked his success.

People as a rule do not object to a man deserving success, only to his getting it.

Whoever still lives who was present that night will remember the continual ripple of laughter from the very first moment—the excitement, the strange almost hysterical joy with which was accepted this 'Trivial Comedy for Serious People'. In some ways it was almost childish fun.

For a long time Oscar had been criticised for his continual use of paradox and epigram; witty and apt and cynical as the fashion of that period, it still was, at times, wearying in the other plays.

*'Men marry because they are tired, women because they are curious.'*

*'The cynic is a person who knows the price of everything and the value of nothing.'*

*'The good American goes to Paris when he dies. Where do the bad Americans go? They go to America.'*



Oscar's style of wit lent itself only too dangerously to imitators: and for very many years we suffered from a plethora of half-witted epigrams and feeble paradoxes by the mimics of his manner.

However he had resolved to have nothing of this formula of wit in the farce. There was even a rollicking pun in the title! He intended it should be all Pure Nonsense. There is not a *mot*, not a paradox in the play, but the unexpectedness of this pleased all the more, and when the curtain went down on the first act—which seemed to be principally about cucumber sandwiches—on the pathetic wail, so well cried by Allan Aynesworth, the childlike simplicity of the phrase 'But I haven't quite finished my teal' it was indeed a triumph. Oscar had been right in replying to a friend who said that the farce should be like a piece of mosaic, 'No, it must be like a pistol shot.' And that was how it went. It came off.

And how they laughed when dignified George Alexander arrived on the stage in the deepest mourning—for the imaginary funeral of Bunbury, who had now become a nuisance to his creator and had to die. Even black-tipped cigarettes were suggested—but Alexander drew the line there.

After the next act Robert Ross and Oscar came to my box in which were the Beardsleys, Mabel and Aubrey, and one or two other friends.

Before I first met Oscar, several years before, I had been told that he was rather like a giant with the wings of a Brazilian butterfly. I was not disappointed, but I thought him far more like a Roman emperor who should have lived at the Pavilion at Brighton with George IV.

He was on this evening at the zenith of his careless, genial popularity, beaming with that *euphoria* that was characteristic of him when he was not in actual grief or pain. He had a low, wide brow, with straight, heavy hair—in which the iron had entered giving him the look of a

Roman bust. His face was a clear red-brown from a long stay at Worthing. He had blue-grey eyes and a well-formed mouth on which was a perpetual smile and often a laugh of sincere humorous enjoyment of life. He had a superb vitality, a short-sighted joy in living for the moment. All genius has its *naïf* side, and he, a spectacular genius, greater perhaps as an improviser in conversation than as a writer, had it in excess. But I am not here intending to criticise the work or the man, merely to give an impression of a period, and specially of one evening that has remained in my memory.

Oscar bore no trace, in 1895, of the pale slender long-haired youth who met Sarah Bernhardt on her first arrival in England; his arms full of Madonna lillies; and who introduced the new 'Helen', the Jersey Lily, Mrs. Langtry, to Millais who painted her portrait, and which led to her introduction to Royalty. He had written reams of verse to her, and was so much in love with her that he insisted on lying on her doorstep half the night until Mr. Langtry—that legendary but real figure—stumbled over him on returning from the club.

He was no longer wan—'alone and palely loitering' like the victim of the Belle Dame sans Merci.

That evening he was dressed with elaborate dandyism and a sort of florid sobriety. His coat had a black velvet collar. He held white gloves in his small pointed hands. On one finger he wore a large scarab ring. A green carnation—echo in colour of the ring—bloomed savagely in his buttonhole, and a large bunch of seals on a black moiré ribbon watch chain hung from his white waistcoat. This costume, which on another man might have appeared perilously like fancy dress, and on his imitators was nothing less, seemed perfectly to suit him; he seemed at ease and to have a great look of the first gentleman in Europe.

'Don't sit on the same chair as Aubrey. It's not compromising' was his first remark. Aubrey Beadsley had a habit of folding up his long, lank figure and perching on the arms of chairs.

'What a contrast the two are,' Oscar continued, 'Mabel like a daisy, Aubrey like the most monstrous of orchids.'

Well the piece went splendidly and we went after to supper at Willis's, a small restaurant then the mode, only a few doors from the theatre. As we walked there in the mud and blinding sleet, what a shock, what a horrible contrast, from the warmth, the perfume within! Oscar did not join us at supper as he usually did. Some dark forecast perhaps—some chill presentiment——

One of the great hits of the evening was when Alexander says of Bunbury, 'He expressed a desire to be buried in Paris,' and the clergyman: 'I fear that does not show a very desirable frame of mind at the last.'

Oscar is buried in Paris under the magnificent monument of Epstein, given by a lady whose friendship for the poet remained steadfast to the end.

# MUSIC

## SPAIN AND HUNGARY

THE special musical number of *L'Esame* (published last year) was confined to the work of contemporary composers in England, France, Germany, and Russia. It had nothing to say of two others whose music seems in many ways more alive than any music written in our time: Manuel de Falla in Spain and Béla Bartók in Hungary. Spain, Hungary and England are alike in one respect. The recent musical revivals took place at the same time as the rediscovery of the genuine folk-songs of the country, not the familiar songs which had formerly passed as such; and these folk-song movements, if not altogether the cause of the revivals, yet had a decided influence upon them. In Hungary, the experiences of folk-song collectors have been much the same as in England and Spain. The type of Hungarian music known in Europe through the rhapsodies and dances of Liszt and Brahms proved on investigation to have arisen mainly at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Béla Bartók, Zoltán Kodály and other composers discovered that there was a much older kind of peasant music, both in Hungary as it now is, and in those parts of the old kingdom which have lately been annexed by other countries—districts which included both Bartók's birthplace (Nagyszentmiklos) and his home (Pressburg). Several thousand melodies were collected, chiefly by phonographic records, in Hungary, Transylvania and Slovakia; and for comparison Bartók made an excursion to Biskra where he investigated Arab music as it was actually performed. The oldest kind of music in Hungary, he found, was represented by melodies in a vague, free, declamatory style; but there were also many others of more recent origin, which had a characteristic

'snap' in the rhythm: something—though not exactly—like an English newspaper-boy when he shouts 'Ex-tra Special', or the tune in *The Beggar's Opera* which begins:

'Cease your funning,  
Force and cunning . . .'

Bartók seems reserved and sceptical on the question of oriental (Turkish) influence on Hungarian music. In Spain, on the contrary, it is usual for writers (and particularly non-Spanish writers) to attribute to 'Moorish influence' anything which they do not immediately understand, in music and everything else; so that any feature which is not easy to explain is labelled 'oriental' to avoid further inquiry. Muslim influence is certainly more likely to be found in Spain than in Hungary. There were Muslims in Spain, it will be remembered, for nearly nine hundred years—from the invasion of 711 until the final expulsion of the Moriscos at the beginning of the seventeenth century; while the Turkish occupation of Hungary only began after the battle of Mohacs in 1525 and ended not long after the Siege of Vienna in 1683. In neither Hungary nor Spain was the subjugation complete; north-west Hungary remained Christian, Transylvania owed only a nominal allegiance to the Turks, and the Pashas of Pest never ruled over a cultivated, musical society like the Caliphs of Córdoba. Most important of all, the singers of folk-songs in Hungary (the peasants), were the slaves, while the Muslims were the masters; but in Spain the proportion of Muslims among the peasants was always high. Turkish influence on the music of another race (e.g. on Armenian church-music) led to extravagant use of decoration; the original rhythms and melodies were hidden under an elaborate embroidery of runs, turns, trills and grace-notes. In Spain, this tendency to profuse ornamentation is seen in every form of art, whether cultivated or popular, deliberate or spontaneous, and it is a

tendency which undoubtedly goes back to the time of the Moors. The Muslim contribution to Spanish music was a manner of performance rather than a type of construction, a manner which has always been exaggerated by gipsy performers, and which exceeds anything to be found in the Hungarian melodies published by Béla Bartók.

Again, the rhythm of the accompanying instrument seems to be far simpler in Hungary than in most parts of Spain. It is conceived on a different principle, and, in its simplest form, is represented by the 'drone' of the bagpipes, blowing a single note all the time. To Muslims, on the contrary, anything approaching harmony was abhorrent, 'illogical and enervating'—at least, in theory—and the drone is harmony reduced to its lowest terms—Rhythm, and combinations of conflicting rhythms produced by instruments of percussion were, and are still, the only kind of accompaniment permitted in Muslim music. The irresistible rhythms of Hungarian dances have often been described, and have bewitched all who have ever felt them. Yet rhythm in Hungary is far simpler than it is in Spain; for in Spain a single good player on the castanets, can produce a combination of rhythms and a contrast of tone-colour which, in its emotional effect, is unsurpassed in the whole range of Spanish music.

Bartók in Hungary and Falla in Spain have worked hard to disinter the older forms of melody, as they were before the vulgarization which set in at the beginning of the last century. The cause of the change in the music of both countries may have been the same. It was the popularity of gipsy musicians, and the imitation of gipsy ways of playing and singing by performers who were not gipsies; and it led to what one would like to call the 'gipsification' of the older melodies. This curious phase of social history, this sudden popularity of gipsy musicians and the aping of their manners of performance may have been due to the romantic movement, for, needless to say, there had been

gipsy musicians in both Spain and Hungary for centuries. The novels of Jókai whose centenary was celebrated last year, describe the life and conditions under which the 'new' Hungarian folk-music arose; indeed stories like *A Magyar Nabob* and numerous others which have been translated into English are far truer to Hungarian life and music than the recent English novel, *Sweet Pepper*, which, interesting as it is, pales before the work of Jókai. In Spain, the transition was taking place about the time of George Borrow and Prosper Mérimée. The Spanish atmosphere is faithfully represented in the original story of *Carmen*, but it was travestied by the opera-librettists to make it agree with 'romantic Spain' as it was understood in Paris. Bartók's music (says Mr. Calvocoressi in *The Monthly Musical Record* for 1922), and, I should like to add, Falla's also, is not of a kind in which arguments against the use of folk-tunes can be found. Their ways of using them reveal anything but mental laziness and poverty of invention. Bartók and Falla, and in England Vaughan-Williams, have each achieved a very definite musical individuality, by going through a course of folk song and, as it were, coming out on the other side. Some composers have 'found themselves' without the help of folk song; the main thing, however, is that, somehow, a musical individuality shall be achieved. In these three composers we find a curious austerity of expression possessed by none of their contemporaries. Vaughan-Williams's *Chaucer Rondels* were the solitary English works for performance last autumn at the International Musical Festival at Venice. They stand aloof from most contemporary music; the nearest approach to them, perhaps, is to be found in the work of Bartók and Falla. The fact is that, at the present moment, a composer of real originality who has trained himself upon the folk songs of his native land, has wider possibilities of expression than one who has not done so; and the paradox follows,

that, while this music is apparently written in the musical language of one country, it is yet the kind of music which, owing to its sincerity, makes an immediate and unmistakable appeal to an international audience. The success of such work at the festivals of the International Society for Contemporary Music, has been conspicuous during the last three years.

An idiom derived from folk-song has an advantage for those of us who cannot travel. We can obtain a real insight into the newest and strangest music by Bartók, Falla and Vaughan-Williams by reading the kind of folk-songs which were once their musical background. In the case of Vaughan-Williams we ought to know the tunes already; with Bartók it is not difficult to get to know them. There is a capital collection of Hungarian folk-songs in course of publication by the Oxford University Press. Another includes songs and dances from the Transylvanian districts, with their curiously mixed population of Rumanians, Saxons and Calvinist Hungarians (Szeklers) so precipitately annexed by Rumania. Bartók has also composed several books of pianoforte pieces intended primarily for children and practically arranged so that grown-up people, by playing them, can easily see what Hungarian tunes are really like and what has been at the back of Bartók's mind. There are other sets of pianoforte pieces by him, more or less derived from folk-songs and dances, of all grades of difficulty, and of great musical interest, so that it is possible to get used to his style when one is at home, and not be as puzzled as a large part of the audience often is, when his quartets or violin-sonatas are played in public. It must be admitted, that with the exception of the new *Dance Suite*, played at the Prague International Festival last spring, and more recently at a Promenade Concert at the Queen's Hall, his later works are becoming more and more reserved and subjective—a natural reaction of a sensitive man to the spectacle of his country being made the



whipping-boy of Eastern Europe. They are difficult to follow, even when played by so admirable an interpreter as Miss Jelly d'Arányi. Yet the enchanted castle in Transylvania seems a little less distant and inaccessible when it is approached through the music of nursery rhymes and Christmas carols.

Bartók's opera, *Duke Bluebeard's Castle*, and his fairy ballet, *The Wooden Prince*, sound as strange and remote as if they were written in Hungarian—as, of course, they are. His musical idiom is strictly Hungarian, as the performances at Frankfurt showed. It is characteristic of the Hungarian language that the accent falls invariably on the first syllable of a word; in the lines of Hungarian songs there is never an 'anacrusis'—the syllable or syllables before the first beat—as there is almost always in English. Mr. Dent, in the article in *L'Esame* already mentioned, has pointed out how deeply English music is affected by the rhythm and structure of the English language. Hungarian music—and this is one of the qualities which make it so strangely attractive—is no less deeply conditioned by the form and accentuation of Hungarian speech. The clearness of pronunciation, the peculiar 'agglutinative' structure by which numbers of particles are tacked on to a root word to give it the exact shade of meaning, the curiously primitive yet logical syntax, are all reflected in Bartók's music, besides the strong accent at the beginning of every phrase.

Béla Bartók gives everyone the chance of 'studying the tendencies of contemporary musicians. Like Falla, he does things which are also being done by Schönberg and Stravinsky; and like Falla again, he does them more clearly and rationally than most other composers. He demonstrates, with the clearness of a mathematical figure, some of the most baffling and complicated innovations in the music of to-day. Vaughan-Williams, Bartók and Falla are all tending in the direction of an austerity of musical

expression. Harmony becomes less important as a means of giving perspective to a work, of allowing it to be seen 'in the round'. Its function is performed by the contrasted colour of single instruments; while rhythm and combinations of different rhythms become more and more a guiding principle of modern music. Falla has developed in rather a different way from Bartók. He shows the same austerity of thought, the same concision in expression; but he has not gone to the same lengths as Bartók in abandoning the conventional feeling for tonality. He has a sharper ear for the timbre of different instruments and a subtler sense of rhythm—indeed he keeps violent cross-rhythms running at the same time in a way that proves that the Spanish Muslims, and later, the Spanish gipsies, if they had no great influence on Spanish melody itself, yet left a strong tradition as to the manner of performing it.

Falla and Bartók are among the clearest thinkers of modern composers. Is it an accident that both of them are said to have a deep and increasing admiration for the harpsichord, and for that clearest of musical thinkers, Domenico Scarlatti?

J. B. TREND

# THE THEATRE

THERE is much ground to cover in the way of plays, for never perhaps in the history of drama have there been so many plays produced and so many taken off—there has been for instance at the time of writing a fortnight of first nights every night.

It has often been said that one's memory is the best discarder, by itself, unaided by will power or reason.

Without trying then, I am conscious of four plays: *The Show* by Galsworthy, *The Last of Mrs. Cheyney* by Fred Lonsdale, The Renaissance Theatre's *White Devil*, and *The Wild Duck*.

There are things in *Dr. Faustus* played by the Phoenix that I remember, and there is *The Cherry Orchard* which we know and loved so well as a play to read; the rather English, or was it Irish, conception of it that has lately been done, did not help our knowledge of it, therefore, it has slipped back into recesses.

In those other four I am sure was true Theatre, something that remains a 'Pièce de Musée' in our minds to bring out and handle lovingly from time to time.

One would like to revive the charming fashion of the great days of more Actor Managers; when after a partridge or a slice of cold beef, on returning from the theatre, they would light their pipes or cigarettes, hand round the pale Rhine wine and discuss performances of note, present or past.—They would criticise, snort at, bow before, eulogize without restraint, and though the older ones grew somewhat wearisome in their anecdotage, we, the younger ones would sit, chin on hand waiting for the next speaker, all the more eager, 'thinking his prattle to be tedious'—

Now, except in bars or corridors on the actual night of production, one gets little opportunity to discuss plays or players. Those charming suppers on the stage are even

going out of vogue. I am not a member of the Garrick Club—I should like to be—for I believe there is a good deal of discussion on stage matters of a somewhat sombre nature, but then the Garrick Club was always liked for its gloom.

It is only on paper that we are bidden to review the stage, so here goes:

The only thing against discussing the Galsworthy play is, that I did not see it. It was, I believe, like all Mr. Galsworthy's plays, masterly in its truth, and masterly in its actableness. No play in my opinion can be truly bad if it gives an opportunity for fine acting. By the way, *The Green Hat* does this, though unfortunately it is not ideally cast. Tallullah Bankhead, with the unerring technique, the worldly wisdom of an American, would give a fine performance, but she seemed too tired to drive a Hispano-Suiza whether into Mayfair or into a tree. A fiery Hispano needs all one's control and a Hispano-Suiza was essential to the character. *The Green Hispano* would have been a far more helpful title, than *The Green Hat*, but for aught we know, as the farmers say, Hat and Hispano in Armenian may be one.

But I am digressing. *The Green Hat* was not one of the big four, and we have to cut out Galsworthy, so I will start fair with Mrs. Cheyney.

If there were a London Art Theatre, which of course there can't be (it was not in the nature of the beast) like the Moscow Art Theatre, the cast at the St. James's Theatre would, I am sure, represent it. They play together, into each other's hands, they all seem to be equal in the sight of God and the producer. Someone, whether great or small, may fall out of line, may underact or overact, he may mentally yawn, the ever watchful eye of the producer will call him into line again. Whether the play is seen now or a year hence it will be well acted.

Sir Gerald du Maurier has an unimportant part; the

kind of part that can be described as the string on which pearls are threaded. Pull away the string and the pearls will be scattered and things of naught. To foreigners and fools he is at times inaudible, but being by far the clearest enunciator upon the stage, almost aggressively so, and having played for years in a far bigger theatre than the St. James's, his inaudibility must be a subtlety. He probably feels that he has no particularly epoch-making things to say, or that Lord Thingamy was the sort of man who would never finish a sentence, it would always end in a woman's mouth. I am inclined to agree with him.

Mr. Lonsdale has indeed the quality of creating fascinating characters—both in this and in *Spring Cleaning* everyone was lovable—though no one was good. Sir Gerald as Lord Dilling (at last I have remembered his name) is a figure one would be glad to meet on a light night. The plot is woven round this Don Juan who has never loved except in practice, and a charming crook just not too good to be true, played by Miss Gladys Cooper.

The world Mr. Lonsdale lives in, but affects rather to despise, would like to be censorious to her a thief and to him a would be seducer, but cannot, there is too much glass in the houses they live in. The last act in which this scene occurs is almost classical in its treatment of repartee. And all ends by marriage, because as a wise man said 'we have found nothing better'.

One loves Miss Cooper with her insolent and surprised immunity from evil. It was subtle of her to wear those hideous night clothes, proof enough that she was as free as a bird from all thought of meeting a man, her other clothes being on the contrary most alluring.

This play's great message is that if you are fundamentally good, and yet play for the highest prizes in life, it does not matter if you do wrong provided that you know it. No one can convey this better than the two chief performers—Gladys Cooper and Gerald du Maurier. It is a

platitude now to say what a treat it is to see them play together, but all the same it is so, they misunderstand each other so perfectly.

One must watch Mr. Squire and Miss Jeffreys, they have such method, but all are good.

I believe some time ago I gave a kind of warning that the high brows who affect to admire such classics as *Bulldog Drummond*, should turn their very serious attention to Sir Gerald's acting.—People who go only to Hammer-smith and to Stage Society Productions and then talk about the English stage, should watch such actors as Sir Gerald du Maurier, Leon Quartermaine, and Henry Ainley for themselves even if they do not admire the things they are in. *Mrs. Cheyney*, of course, must be almost everybody's money—it is high comedy—but watch him. People say, and mostly I am forced to admit critics, that Sir Gerald is always himself—wrong! He is a true character actor—the character actor of fine shades—not the violent character actor of old time, first a fat man, then a thin, a greasy Jew, or a thin-nosed cleric, no, those are the masks of the past to be bought at Clarkson's.

He is the actor who conveys someone just a little different from himself—each time another man—though probably like many actors he has no self.

Watch him as the strong man who captains industry—and can't make love—watch him as the decadent Frenchman who can and will make love—watch him as the hearty beer-drinking live wire of the trenches, *Bulldog Drummond*—watch him as the No-good-man in the Ware Case—The—natural suicide, the soured unmoral cynic with a tender spot for his old friends—watch his three phases of one man but never a phase that could not belong to that man—the drugged tired Mr. Dearth in *Dear Brutus* in the second act—watch him in another world—an angel who loves his daughter singing in a wood—children and thrushes would eat out of his hand—watch his broken passionate

heart in the third act and try and see another actor's heart break without making you feel uncomfortable.—But that is really a past achievement——

Watch him now—you are not too late—watch his entrance. This man has a Rolls Royce—this man has too many gold cigarette cases, but he uses one of gunmetal—watch his approach to the syphon—watch his certainty with the women—his rudeness which is balm to them—watch him stalking this one woman for the first time he is unsure of——

Watch him in the last scene. He has nothing in the world to say—he watches her face—in profile he, profile perdu—yet we know by his ankles (here shown to advantage) exactly what he is going through. We are happy for him when he throws up his pocket handkerchief—he seems to have thrown it up for the first time—but you can see him throwing it up every night—he has found an illusion—women have disappointed him—not this one—Oh, it's very great art—and analytical at that.

For our own part we would like to see him handle a new part every week—but often back to this again, for it is so satisfactory.

*The White Devil* is a play of iridescent beauty like the multi-coloured water on the blackness of a morass, the beauty transcends the tragedy and blackness beneath——

It loses nothing by being acted, even hurriedly as on the last occasion by the Renaissance Theatre Company—they met in ill-chosen places at difficult times and those of the most limited.

Each man had to shift for himself or take his *vis à vis* into a passage and spout his part with her, yet on the day the broken pieces of the vase fitted admirably—it was Miss Craig who fitted it together—she of all people who knows how to face difficulties. She smooths off the corners and tells when to pull the curtains. With daring she cut out pages at the last rehearsal, whole scenes were sacrificed

in order to bring the performance within the three hours limit.

Mr. Esme Percy played with extraordinary courage in ruthless cruelty as Bracciano—the richness of his hatred rolled off his tongue in the most National Renaissance way—he seems to have drunk hot blood from his cradle.

Miss Cowie played also as though she could think no other way—when she said ‘What’s a whore?’ It was a magnificent challenge.

It is said by scholars that there are isolated lines in this play far finer than Shakespeare, but Webster’s view of life was always cruel—Shakespeare always kind. One or two sentences stick in one’s memory and will always do so.

*Vit. Corombona* : ‘My soul, like to a ship in a black storm,  
Is driven, I know not whither.’

‘I prithee yet remember,  
Millions are now in graves, which at last day  
Like mandrakes shall rise shrieking.

*Cornelia* : ‘There’s Rosemary for you, and rue for you,’

which so many commentators have made much of comparing it with Ophelia’s speech:

‘There’s rue for you and Columbine.’

*Cornelia* : (doth this in several forms of distraction)

‘Call for the robin-red breast, and the wren,  
Since o’er shady groves they hover,  
And with leaves and flowers do cover  
The friendless bodies of unburied men.  
Call unto his funeral dole  
The ant, the field-mouse, and the mole,  
To rear him hillocks that shall keep him warm,  
And (when gay tombs are robb’d) sustain no harm;  
But keep the wolf far thence that’s, foe to men,  
For with his nails he’ll dig them up again.’

This as a simple ditty or ballad of the time is exactly the



same premise as Ophelia, but then she says what is infinitely human, more human than Shakespeare:

'They would not bury him 'cause he died in a quarrel.'

*Bracchiano* : 'How miserable a thing it is to die 'mongst women howling.'

is the last word of cynicism.

Giovanni (Isabella's little son) has a scene of grinding sadness—one can hardly bear to be there when he says:

'What do the dead do, Uncle? do they eat,  
Hear music, go a hunting, and be merry,  
As we that live?

No, coz; they sleep.

Lord, lord, that I were dead!  
I have not slept these six nights. When do they wake?

Fortunately the Phoenix Society are repeating this play shortly—one wonders if they will as it were bring out new phases of the design or merely mark those that we remember already with a stronger and more indelible pencil.

In *Dr. Faustus* Mr. Ion Swinley gives a magnificent performance. As he sat at his table looking like Leonardo da Vinci as the curtain went up, in fact whenever he sat, a thrill went through me—the terror that he was in touch with another world. Mr. Thesiger's peevish Mephistophilis was an extraordinary study—whoever thought of making him sour and ill tempered—a mere servant of Lucifer?

There was perhaps rather too little attempt to give an effect of the supernatural—all spirits came and went with a noise louder than a footman. The poetry was exquisitely rendered—and one was perfectly aware of it all the way through.

Personally, I like poetry to be ladled out—not glossed over like prose.

In the first scene we meet with such lines as:

‘Shadowing more beauty on their airy brows  
Than have the white breasts of the Queen of Love.’

The oft-repeated Lucifer in Mephistophilis’ first scene with Faustus is exciting in its beauty so that one can hardly keep still.

*Faustus* : ‘And what are you that live with Lucifer?’

*Mephistophilis* : ‘Unhappy spirits that fell with Lucifer,  
Conspired against our God with Lucifer,  
And are forever damn’d with Lucifer.’

Then later:

*Faustus* : ‘Had I as many souls as there be stars,  
I’d give them all for Mephistophilis.’

(The famous Helen speech comes almost as a shock) and when he does dash into prose, how intensely he burns, how absolutely straight to life he goes.

*Faustus* : ‘Ah my God, I would weep! but the Devil draws in my tears. Gush forth blood instead of tears! Yea, life and soul! Oh, he stays my tongue! I would lift up my hands; but see, they hold them, they hold them!’

### THE WILD DUCK.

Miss Sybil Arundale is one of the people to recognise that Ibsen and Capek have lain too long untouched. The English public were quite ready for them five years ago, which is about the period when good new plays seemed to have had such a terrible slump.

*The Wild Duck* I am afraid made no money—she will have to persist longer and give more Ibsen before it is driven home to the new generation; but though our very distinguished colleague of the *New Statesman* disagrees with me, I must say the play was very finely given.

Mr. McCarthy says that the characters played by Mr. Milton Rosmer, Miss Arundale, and Miss Baddeley were not like that—that Ibsen did not mean them in that

way at all. But it was the way to show them, it was a way of making one feel the great nobility of the play. They are all trying for something magnificent—there is in them all the quality which makes death and suffering such a little affair—what Mr. Wells calls ‘the soulless devouring clamour’ of matter, which is nothing at all compared to one little bit of mind.

As I walked up Jermyn Street afterwards, I was exalted, happy, soaring over the little deformities that are the concrete things in one’s life. There the theatre is wonderful—it grips one—it lays a hand on one’s shoulder and makes one’s hair stir more than the written word that one reads for oneself.

I want to see *The Wild Duck* constantly, I want to see *The Doll’s House*. . . . I want to see *Three Sisters* and *Uncle Vania*, and for it always to be possible to see them as one can go to a gallery or a museum to see a beautiful thing one loves, so one should be able to turn over the leaves, so to speak of these plays on the stage. One should not have to wait and gape for three or four years and wonder what the drama is coming to.

Mr. Arnold Bennett tells me that Marlow’s *Faust* and the Ibsen plays were the finest studies for a playwright—perhaps if more young writers knew this we should get more plays.

VIOLET RAY

# NEW YORK CHRONICLE

THE GREAT GATSBY, by F. Scott Fitzgerald, has given me an extraordinary pleasure; even if Sinclair Lewis' *Arrowsmith* and Mrs. Wharton's *The Mother's Recompense* are as good as their admirers believe them to be, I should still feel that Fitzgerald's novel is more important. Lewis and Mrs. Wharton are known quantities and one can predict their line of development; Fitzgerald is much younger, his talent is only beginning to mature; and, until now, it has appeared to be the most abundant talent, most casually wasted, in American fiction. For Fitzgerald's person I have long had an affectionate regard, and it annoyed me not to find wholly admirable his first two novels, *This Side of Paradise* and *The Beautiful and Damned*. The first was an American step-child of *Sinister Street*, the collegiate portions, with traces of H. G. Wells; the second, a much better work, influenced by Mrs. Wharton and Joseph Conrad, had, although I was too obtuse to discover it for myself, a strong satiric strain, and this appeared again in *The Diamond as Big as the Ritz*, one of Fitzgerald's few good shorter pieces, and in *The Vegetable*, a play with a central episode like that of *Beggar on Horseback*, which it anticipated, but without success on the stage. The first novel had a fabulous success; Fitzgerald had just left Princeton and must have been about twenty-one at the time. It was treated as an *exposé* of love-making at our colleges; and, because of it, the word 'petting', soon to be displaced by 'necking', supplanted its almost-synonym, flirting, in our vocabulary. The second novel, too, was successful, and Fitzgerald began to write endlessly for the popular magazines, stories and travel-sketches and even an article on 'How to Live on \$30,000 a Year'. It was after this last had been written, after the experience for it had been gained at the price named, that Fitzgerald

took his enchanting household and the unfinished manuscript of *The Great Gatsby* to the south of France.

I mention these small details because they are the normal circumstances of American authorship, only multiplied a hundred times. They are the prelude, usually, to extremely bad novels; and they form the prelude, in this case, to an extremely good one. *The Great Gatsby* is a brilliant work, and it is also a sound one; it is carefully written, and vivid; it has structure, and it has life. To all the talents, discipline has been added. The form is again derived from James through Mrs. Wharton, and there are cadences direct from the pages of Conrad; but I feel that Fitzgerald has at last made his borrowings his own, and that they nowhere diminish the vitality of his work. The subject, too, ought to be of interest outside America; it is a drama of an intense passion played on Long Island, the summer home of wealth, and even, in spots, of Society, near New York. Fitzgerald has no feeling for Main Street; his satire is not that of a reformer; and he has certainly the best chance, at this moment, of becoming our finest artist in fiction. The press has not been too enthusiastic about *The Great Gatsby*; Mencken has notably discovered its virtues, but so intense is our preoccupation with the drab as subject, that this story of a Long Island Trimalchio has been compared to the preposterous stories of high-life written by Robert W. Chambers. At the moment of writing, *The Constant Nymph* is the best-seller, and, in addition, is receiving unlimited critical praise. I am not concerned with Fitzgerald's royalties; but he stands at this time desperately in need of critical encouragement, and temporarily I shall agitate for an outrageous import tax on English novels.

*The Great Gatsby* came at the end of a not too distinguished season. The theatre has been as lively as any other of the arts, the movies a little less so, music has been energetic in publicity, but not exceptionally pleasing in

new works. The play which I only mentioned six months ago, *What Price Glory?* is still running, and such has been the change of temper in its regard that the American Legion, which once tried to prevent Kreisler from giving a recital, is expected to invest in the touring companies next year. It is, I believe, already booked for London, where I trust it will be played in its original form, with all its raciness of language and its naive comedy. That special un-literary tongue Mr. Mencken properly calls the American language appears again in two comedies, *Is Zat So?* and *The Fall Guy*, and is their chief merit; the Pulitzer Prize play, *They Knew What They Wanted*, by Sidney Howard, was produced by the Theatre Guild, and in it Miss Pauline Lord was so extraordinarily good in one act, and so extraordinarily effective in another, that the considerable merits of the play were either overlooked or magnified into supreme virtues. It was, altogether, a notable year for the Guild, which, after seven years of existence, opened a superb new playhouse with a revival, not a good one, of *Cæsar and Cleopatra*, and maintained for about one hundred performances an American play (*Processional*, by John Howard Lawson) which actually indicated a new development in the form of American drama. Lawson feels that the conventional theatre in America is 'seriously dead', and that the real vitality we have is shown in vaudeville and burlesque. The form of *Processional* was derived from these music-hall entertainments, and a song-and-dance as naturally interrupted a 'dramatic' scene as any new turn does in vaudeville. The subject of *Processional* seemed to me so much less happy—it dealt with conflict between miners and operators in the West Virginia coal region—and was so unduly emphasized that the play actually lost point, for the 'jazz symphony of American life', it claimed to be was revealed far more in the technique, in the handling of the material, than in the material itself. The disorderliness and cross-

currents of everyday existence found their counterpart in the brutal interjection of irrelevances and breaks in tone. At about the time of the production a man was entombed in a cave in Kentucky; the work of rescue went on for many days and the event was first-page news; on Sunday thousands of people came, driving their motor-cars many miles, to picnic on the spot, and jazz records were played on phonographs and dancing went on; it was the spirit of this extraordinary medley which Lawson conveyed in his form, and it corresponded more to actuality than the legend he chose to embody.

An unfortunate turn has been given to the direction of jazz itself by a misquotation from a speech by Otto H. Kahn, chief patron of the Metropolitan Opera House. Mr. Kahn finds himself not only the parent of the leader of a jazz band, but the propagandist of an opera to be composed in the idiom of jazz and to be played in the rather dull sanctuary of grand opera. Perhaps it is a natural development, perhaps intellectual interest has been the cause, I do not know; but jazz has turned a bit lofty and seeks another name for itself and mistakenly plays Scheherezade at elaborate concerts. The popular composer now enjoying the suffrage, I will not say the patronage, of the intellectual, is George Gershwin, who, about two years ago, turned for a moment from extremely good songs and dances, and wrote a concerto (*Rhapsody in Blue*) which seems to me a legitimate development of our syncopated music, a little too Lisztian, but decidedly good. Gershwin has since composed the excellent music for *Lady, Be Good*, and the reasonably workmanlike score of *Tell Me More*; but he figures in public more as the divinely destined composer of that ultimate jazz opera. It has been reported that he has undertaken this with a libretto drawn from Firbank's *Prancing Nigger*. The misfortune of this, to my mind, is not so much in the artificial stimulus, in wanting to do an opera

for the Metropolitan; it is in the mistaken idea of the nature of jazz. The whole turn of jazz is away from words, and towards dance; the logical development is ballet, not opera. The *Krazy Kat Ballet*, by John Alden Carpenter, was a work, partly Russo-French in manner, by a composer seriously trained in the grand style. His more purely American music, a new ballet called *Skyscrapers*, was intended for Diaghilev, but I have not heard of a production; it is scheduled, naturally, for the Metropolitan next year, and from a sketchy performance on the piano, I judge it will be good. A ballet by Emerson Whithorne, *Sooner or Later*, was produced this year, and one section, at least, was actual jazz ballet, sufficient to prove to me that the relationship between that style of music, and that form of expression, is a natural one. So far no professional writer of ragtime has done anything noteworthy in this field; it is, I am sure, the logical development from the syncopated dance numbers of our revues and the syncopated burlesque plays made famous by George M. Cohan and Irving Berlin. I do not hold that syncopated music cannot be used in grand opera; but the form, as we know it here, seems peculiarly unadaptable to a music which has, even in the hands of its most skilful professionals, gone far beyond its verbal accompaniments. We no longer sing our popular songs; we dance them.

I am writing on an island in the Adirondack Mountains, and the effect of lakes and hills seemed to make me forget the names and qualities of books published. The poems of E. E. Cummings, one volume from the Dial Press and another privately printed, are as intransigent as ever in appearance, but their success with the reviewers has been great; it is only five years since the publication of the first of them, in *The Dial*, was greeted with laughter and alarm. Miss Marianne Moore, having received the Dial award for 1924, and issued her *Observations* through the Dial Press, appropriately becomes managing editor of the



magazine, a position now the more important since Scofield Thayer, its editor, retires from the minute direction of that journal. I feel that I was myself too long, and too recently, associated with *The Dial*, to sum up its first five years. The chief points of criticism have been: from *The Little Review*, that it is a de-alcoholized *Little Review*; from the intellectual bourgeoisie, that it is too radical; from Mr. Ernest Boyd, that it pretends to be contemporary, yet publishes the work of Thomas Mann and Anatole France, and appoints its foreign correspondents without the approval of Mr. Boyd. *The Dial* is generally supposed to be run by a clique, to the non-existence of which I can testify. Indeed, the more intelligent criticism is that there is not enough cohesion between the writers, certainly not enough specific direction in the work it publishes. It will, I believe, continue in its moderate faith, that by publishing what it considers the best work in conventional and novel forms, it will serve art and letters.

*The American Mercury* is a great success, financially, I understand. Mencken is now reported to be sole editor, losing, after years of collaboration, the assistance of George Jean Nathan, the most entertaining and often the best of our dramatic critics. Too many contributors to the magazine write on Mencken's subjects in the style of Mencken and Nathan; there is always an American legend or two to be destroyed: the Liberty Bell, it seems, did not ring on the Fourth of July, 1776, and Captain Kidd was not a pirate. Each number contains some first-class studies of American actualities, the status of Prohibition, the nature of the Chatauqua lecture circuit; and there is a collection of imbecilities clipped from the country's press which is really beyond price. The *Mercury* was originally called by its sponsors 'the magazine which the civilized minority is reading'; recently I saw an advertisement with the word majority substituted, and this may be of significance.

# CINEMA AND BALLET IN PARIS

THAT so alternately maligned and eulogized youngest daughter of Apollo, the cinema, proved to be the *grande vedette* of the past Paris season; a *vedette* in her own right and a *vedette* because of her marriage with the boldest of the children of Apollo, the dance: a union arranged by Picabia, the match-maker of much that is new in the arts.

The attention of the Parisian public was focussed upon the consideration of the cinema by the season of classic films shown at the Théâtre du Vieux Colombier early in the year. Beginning with the nursery days of the old Biograph and Vitagraph one-reel thrillers, the entire history and development of the cinema was exhibited in chronological sequence; the Wild West cow-boy adventure films, the Keystone Comedies, the first Griffith spectacles, the latest German productions.

This unique opportunity of reviewing the cinema as a whole, of watching its inceptions and evolution, formed a splendid background and criterion in judging the three latest developments in the cinema; which placed the film at the apex of the Paris theatrical season; the Beaumont film; the L'Herbier film, and the Picabia film.

Of the three, the film which the Count de Beaumont sponsored and directed with the assistance of Chaumette, the *metteur en scène*, *A Quoi Révent les Jeunes Films*, although its title was a bit pretentious, proved to be the most original and fertile. This film is the first attempt that has been made to produce an entirely abstract film; one in which there is no story of any kind nor even any 'human interest'; a film which would be, in reality, 'moving pictures'. Every possible use was made of the medium;

all the film tricks were incorporated and many new ones invented in an attempt to keep entirely within the field of the cinema and to keep it pure *cinema*. Some of the results were amazing: a landscape was filmed and the negative projected on the screen: the trees and faces of the people showed white while the ground, the sky, and the clothes appeared black; the profile of a young man was projected life-size on one corner of the screen, then a second and a third and so on, until the whole screen was covered with overlapping profiles of the same face; Parisian celebrities were photographed in distorting mirrors which gave weirdly contorted portraits; the most unearthly effects were obtained by filming ink being poured into a glass bowl filled with water; a ride in a scenic-railway succeeded in giving all the physical effects of an actual ride. Certainly this sort of film can never interest the ordinary movie 'fans' any more than cubist experiments interested the average 'picture lovers', but such an experiment is of prime importance to producers and those who believe in the future of the cinema. After seeing such a film one realised that there is no more reason why the cinema should be exclusively devoted to drama than that literature should be entirely concerned with the novel and short-story: there can also be a poetry of the films.

In the Marcel L'Herbier film, *L'Inhumain*, an attempt was made to incorporate both the abstract and human in a popular film. The art direction was entrusted to the painter, Leger, and the architect, Mallet-Stevens, while the scenario was by L'Herbier. It was on this division of endeavour that the film floundered, for while each side did his part there was an incongruity of purpose evident. The scenario was *chichi*, pure and simple; the old subject which continues to excite the bourgeoisie: the life and loves of an artist! A *prima-donna*, of the most 'modern' inclinations (Georgette Leblanc) unaffected by such minor considerations as the human being, is

loved by a inventor (Jacques Catelain), but to no avail—*voilà L'Inhumain!* Obviously the title was an effort to beguile the public, to dupe them into believing that there was some connection between the attitude of the *prima-donna* and the experimentation of modern art. However there might have been much more ingenuity shown in devising a scenario which would have found a more solid justification for the introduction of experimentation in film technique. It is the same criticism that so many found to make of *The Cabinet of Doctor Caligari*. The laboratory scene done by Leger in his best and most characteristic manner was a triumph both for him and for the cinema. Never has the film shown a more satisfactory and beautiful picture: the composition of the machinery, and its ingenuity of invention together with the patent leather costumes of the workmen, was a thing of real beauty and entirely within the realm of the cinema. As a whole, one can find much to object to, but as an effort to make the film a thing of beauty one can only find words of praise for both Leger and L'Herbier.

*Entreacte*, the Picabia film, formed the middle part of his ballet, *Relâche*, produced by the *Ballet Suédoise*, which, in its final season before disbanding, showed signs of the beginnings of life. Would that Rolfe de Mare had had the vision to engage Picabia as collaborator earlier in the history of that ineffectual organization! But de Mare never knew quite what he was after; his motto seems to have been 'Try anything once', and what things he did try! The only other moment of inspiration which descended upon the unsubtle Swedes was when de Mare engaged the collaboration of that other first-rate man of the theatre, Jean Cocteau.

The announcement of a ballet, entitled *Relâche*, by the two most famous *blaguers* of contemporary Paris, was enough to put the public on its guard. However, the opening night found the usual fashionable and artistic

public at the doors of the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées . . . to find the doors locked! No explanation was forthcoming, so eventually the crowd slowly disbanded, furious. That the *blague* was on the famous *blaguers* occurred to no one. However that was the truth of the matter; at the last hour Borlin had sprained his ankle and the performance could not take place. There followed frantic explanations by both Satie and Picabia which no one quite believed nor could anyone quite disbelieve; that sort of joke would have been too obvious. So finally a week later a second first-night was announced, and the patient Parisian public turned out again. The general opinion was that *ça valait la peine*.

*Relâche* defied intellectual analysis. One felt that there was a theme, but its meaning never quite reached the surface. Each time that one thought, 'now that's what Picabia means by all this', he immediately produced a contradictory theme and one was lost again, which was exactly what Picabia *did* mean. The whole ballet was built on the theme of the illogicality of logic: it was like a conversation in a drawing-room, where everyone talks with the most correct intonations and gestures, but which on examination by an outsider prove to be quite meaningless; it is only the intonations and gestures which give the appearance of logic, the whole conversation is without subject or predicate. To accomplish this in a ballet required immense ingenuity and wit. One episode was typical: a fireman enters with two buckets, one filled with water and the other empty. He advances to the footlights and empties the filled bucket into the empty bucket with the greatest interest and seriousness. That accomplished, he proceeds to refill the originally filled bucket with exactly the same interest and seriousness and continues this all through the ballet, forming a sort of *lieu-motif*, the futility of all human endeavour. Had Picabia used this idea once the result would not have been amusing, but the

persistance, the repetition, of such an absurdity was uproariously funny. The *décor*, also by Picabia, showed the same invention and appreciation of the innate beauty of modern utilities. The entire effects of the *décor* was gained through the use of electric bulbs, not the 'electrical effects' of a Loie Fuller with all their muddy mysticism, but the cold, clear vitality of electricity itself, the electric bulb in all its powerful nudity. Picabia is the only modern who is at the same time untraditional; he is not attempting to infuse new life into old forms, but rather he is trying to keep the pulsating new forms alive by allowing them to be themselves and nothing else. There is *au fond* little difference between the efforts of Picabia and the music-hall, just one small difference and that makes the two efforts worlds apart; Picabia has an instinct for the profoundly vital in the music-hall, while the music-hall is not conscious of itself. Perhaps the experimentation of men such as Picabia will finally make a bridge between the two.

Although *Entreacte*, the Picabia film, formed the second act of *Relâche*, there was no visible connection between the two, except that Borlin was in both. Picabia seems to be of the opinion of many of the critics of the cinema, that the original one-reelers were the most characteristic films; in any case he has modelled his film on them, but with a wit and cynism that is entirely Picabia. *Entreacte* is, as were all the one-reelers, the story of a chase. The film opens with the shooting and killing of Borlin; the rest of the film is the story of his burial. The funeral procession starts at a slow-motion death pace, followed by the mourners on foot. Gradually the horse pulling the hearse quickens his gait and the mourners in all their grief are forced to quicken theirs. Faster and faster the horse and hearse go speeding on, until the whole funeral procession is at breakneck speed. Finally the horse breaks away from the hearse. Then follows the

most terrible chase; the hearse dashing after the horse, the mourners after the hearse. The chase becomes fanatical, the speed unearthly. One sees only legs in confusion, the tops of trees, the eyes of the horse. In desperation the corpse gets out of the coffin and jumps upon the horse. Gradually the whole procession slows down and the weary corpse is finally buried. Never has speed been so marvellously portrayed. In the conventional films speed has always been shown by showing the object in motion; in the Picabia film everything is shown in motion but the object itself. Never before has the cinema given the *feeling* of speed, Picabia succeeded in portraying speed in action.

The influence of the cinema upon the ballet was inevitable. Already last season the first manifestation of this influence was shown in Cocteau's ballet, *Le Train Bleu*, when the entire *corps-de-ballet* imitated the slow-motion films. This year Picabia, in his *Ciné-Sketch*, paid direct tribute to the film. *Ciné-Sketch* was a cinema done in ballet form to jazz music. The theme and execution were entirely cinema; the rhythm pure ballet. The amalgamation of these two arts was not as difficult as one might suppose; all the best films at the present time are accompanied by music especially written for them, and what after all is the dance but movement to organized sounds? The transition accomplished by Picabia seemed the most natural evolution of the two arts, each gaining in its own field.

The eighteenth season of the Ballet Russe was limited to eight performances. The general opinion which, until this year was only whispered was that the Ballet Russe had seen better days. As a friend said, '*Le Ballet Russe est un vieux cheval, à qui de temps en temps on donne une piqure.*' The *piqures* this season were two youths, Pedro Pruna and Dukelsky; the Pruna *piqure* was successful, his costumes and *décor* had a deserved triumph; the Dukelsky *piqure*, perhaps owing to the *décor* and costumes

of Braque or to the worn-out theme, had no effect on the old horse. The last performance, which was generally known was to be the exit of Dolin from the Diaghileff ranks, was almost in the key of the old Ballet Russe enthusiasm; Dolin danced in the *Train Bleu* with infinite beauty, and gained a deserved enthusiasm on the part of the audience.

What might have proven one of the most interesting theatrical events of the season, the play, *Amour à Glace un Bon Soir*, by Louis Aragon, with *décor* by Miro, and with Marcel Herrand as *metteur en scène*, which Madame Beriza had in her repertoire at the Théâtre des Mathurins, was unfortunately prohibited by the owner of the theatre on patriotic grounds!

The end of the season was marked by an overwhelming catastrophe—the death of one of the most valiant of all the moderns, Eric Satie. That this distinguished and heroic man, father and leader of the modern French musicians, who, after forty years of unappreciated creation, was just beginning to be recognized and valued for his real importance, should be cut off in the full blossom of his genius, leaves his appreciators stupified and a gap in the life of artistic Paris impossible to fill.

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*To the Editor.*

SIR,

I have been deeply interested in Mr. I. A. Richards' article on 'A Background for Contemporary Poetry'—the more so since I ventured some little while ago, in the preface to a volume called *Fantastica*, to state the opinion I then held on the relations of art and science and more particularly of scientific and poetic truth. After two very careful readings of Mr. Richards' article I venture to place on paper some observations on the matter, in the hope that they may interest your readers, and, whether correct or no, provoke some further discussion of this absorbing topic. It is with the greatest reluctance that I in some particulars differ from Mr. Richards, for whose work in *The Principles of Literary Criticism* and *Foundations of Aesthetics* I have a great respect. Any statement I make, however downright in form, is held by me only tentatively. Many of these statements are vague, amateurish, and perhaps foggy, a fact of which I am very much aware. But they aim rather at suggestion than at precision, since I believe the whole matter is at present so obscure as almost totally to defy exactitude.

Surely the 'truth' of poetry is not the 'truth' of science. The 'truth' of poetry is, I take it, truth in relation specifically to what is human a presentation of man's feeling in relation to the universe. Scientific 'truth' is, I take it, a presentation of the universe without specific reference to what is human. Poetic truth is in a sense a measure of *intensity*, scientific of *extensity*. Science seeks to construct a working-thought-model of the universe in the abstract, art in the concrete; science by disentangling the truths from the process of operation, art by bodying them forth in process of operation. Both forms of truth are verified in the media from whence they sprang. Science verifies its 'truth' *consciously* in experiment; the truth of art is verified in the emotion of man. Remy de Gourmont (I think) said 'Science is worth what the scientist is worth.' The same is true of poetry. In both cases it is a final integrity that counts. If the poet of to-day continually lives in contact with scientific truth, that 'truth' is likely to modify his poetic 'truth', but it will only do so in so far as he feels the 'scientific' truth adds to or supersedes the 'poetic'. If, for instance, he learns that the trees in a wood are fighting each other for life in a struggle to survive, that truth may or may not prove too powerful for his poetic, Wordsworthian truth.

There was a period in my own life when this seemed to happen to me. But one day it came to me that it matters not so much as I had thought what the trees are doing according to the scientist for the truth the poet writes, though the words may be about trees, is really a truth about man's feelings as they exist between him and the trees. As more and more scientific truth comes into the world, new myths (that is presentations of this *feeling* relation) come to be invented, because the old phenomena have been presented to man in novel lights or entirely new phenomena swim into consciousness. There are many mythologies. And constantly we invent new mythologies. But that is not to say that a tree cannot still be a sylph. It only means that a tree can be many other things. I emphatically disagree that the Magic View of the world is doomed. How can it be doomed as long as there is delight and terror for man in the mystery of the world? It may be modified by addition, but, as Keyserling says, 'all truth is ultimately symbolical'. Very slowly perhaps certain of man's feelings-in-relation-to-the-universe are dropped off. There is survival of the fittest among such feelings. The grosser animisms may slowly perish—though there are few imaginative persons, I suppose, who cannot appreciate the line of a comparatively modern poet, 'Crains dans le mur aveugle un regard qui t'épie'. Such animisms perish because they are largely crowded out by the feelings set up by the perceptions by man of new aspects of things and his relation to such aspects. But, I take it, it will be a tremendously long time before Homer is superseded, for there is as yet not enough change in man's consciousness (albeit more sensitive to complexity) and in environment-at-large and the usual events (skies and waters, the mystery of common things and mortal habits, of birth, wonder, begetting, quarrelling, the prospect of death, dying and mourning), to bring about that supersession. Milton said his purpose was 'to justify God's ways to Man'; Goethe, that poetry exists 'to make man contented with the world and his condition': these are biological functions. I regard poetry and pure science as, at bottom, the noise made by man in the process of having to adjust himself. The noise he makes settling his soul down (part of which noise is poetry) need, as far as his relations to the terrors and delights of existence are concerned, have nothing to do with what that which gives rise to these terrors and delights really is.

The first great modern poet, Goethe, was also a scientist. He expressed no such fear of science as Wordsworth and Keats in relation to Newton and the rainbow. He understood well enough that it is poetry that absorbs science, not science poetry, and that poetry is, as it were, always one step ahead. (Observe how, in the famous lines about the waterfall that close Scene 1, Act 1, of *Faust*, Part 2, the new aspects of the world that optics has yielded him help to produce a new myth, 'Am farbigen Abglatz haben wir das Leben'. Incidentally, while the scientific premises which gave rise to this line are, if I am to judge from various historians of Goethe's life,

false, the myth is felt to be poetically true: proof of my assumption that "the noise . . . has nothing to do with what that which gives rise to these terrors and delights really is." See also Lao-tsu, most poetic of Chinese philosophers.)

It appears to me that Mr. Richards attributes altogether too much influence to science. The probability seems to me that, so far from science being felt by the poet to ask poetry for poetry's credentials and poetry having a hard time in consequence of not being able to produce them, the reverse is going to be after much heart-searching the case. Science is shortly going to be asked for its credentials. The chances are that when produced (probably by mathematicians) these credentials will be largely incomprehensible by the poets. In any event they will probably be tentative even as the conclusions of science as to a 'world picture' are bound to be tentative. I remember asking Herr Michaelis, one of the greatest bio-chemists alive, whether he had any notion of the nature of life. He replied, 'As far as I can see it is a miracle.' I have seen a letter from Bertrand Russell which contains the following sentence, 'As to whether we know anything, it is necessary to define "knowing", which is a difficult matter. Our knowledge is all vague and approximate: the more vague the less likely to be mistaken.' Sometimes it seems to me the essence of the poetic feeling is the sense of the miraculous, and certainly I never knew a real and considerable poet who hadn't more or less continually a sense of the miraculousness of being. Modern physics, modern biology tend to increase our sense of the miraculous. Where you have mystery, there you have the poet posing the issue in myth. I have a letter from Professor Santayana which seems to me to have a bearing upon these questions. He writes, 'The attitude you say Leopardi ascribes to the Greeks' (I had referred to the noble pages on *Leopardi's Thought* in Bickersteth's volume of *Leopardi's Poems*) 'seems to me perfectly adequate. What is it? To observe facts (not sensations, but objects and events recognized and defined by the intellect) and to frame any poetic myths which those facts may suggest. These myths must not be taken for dogma: Matthew Arnold learned that from the Greeks and taught it to English-speaking people of my generation. But they may be philosophic myths, if they express dramatically the issues and values which nature proposes to the human soul. Myths convey knowledge symbolically, and they express human genius appropriately. They cannot be produced or even understood by your mere spectator, because to him they would be, as you say, mere lies: but they are not lies, they are true fables.' Here let me pause to note that it would *seem* as if, in so far as the modern poet acquires the scientific approach as opposed to merely unconsciously absorbing some of the findings, he will be the more Greek and will therefore keep his eye rather on the aspects of things than his feelings about them. That, however, by no means prevents what he writes being fabulous. For poetry is not the truth about the thing itself, but

about man's reaction to it. 'And in the end,' continues Prof. Santayana, 'science, too, is a fable, although it may be a mathematical and practically useful one. I mean that it cannot be expected to copy the essence of nature (consider the difference between the most accurate book of history and the world in its fulness during the events there described). All that science can be expected to do is to discover a system of notation by which the outlines of such facts as are important to man and observable by him may be described: it will be the order and relation of these facts, rather than the facts themselves in their concrete, intrinsic nature, that will be best rendered. I think, then, that both science and wisdom fall within the sphere of "myth."'

I doubt very much whether I have shed any light on the problem, but I hope this letter will serve to provoke others to do so.

Yours, etc.,

*August 17th., 1925*

ROBERT NICHOLS

# BOOKS OF THE QUARTER

*The Travel Diary of a Philosopher.* By Count Hermann Keyserling. Translated by J. Holroyd Reece. (London : Jonathan Cape, Ltd.) 2 vols. 36s. net.

This is essentially a book of confessions, and its value is a strictly personal one. We are therefore moved in the first place to question the kind and quality of the author's personality.

In this case there is no need to deduce the author's character from the nature of his experiences. Count Keyserling is a ruthless analyst of his own self and paints his portrait too ingenuously to require a discount for vanity. Let us gather together a few sentences which are scattered through these two volumes and see how completely they define their subject. 'In the days of my childhood and adolescence . . . I hated books and found all my happiness in observing, hunting and taming animals . . .' In the biographical note which prefaces the book, we are told that after taking his degree at Vienna, Keyserling went to live in Paris, and there he acquired a very great admiration for Flaubert, and much distinction as a *causeur*, though 'this elegant accomplishment in no way interfered with the serious study of Kant, Schopenhauer, and F. A. Lange'. But more significantly we are told that 'the human influence to which Count Keyserling feels himself most indebted is the influence of his women friends'. He confesses that at twenty his 'capacities were not co-ordinated', but 'when my literary and philosophic tendency became dominant, I acquired an ideal focus in which to collect the rays of my spirit, and the more these became concentrated, the more capable did I become. I grew from being a republic gradually into a monarchy, each year I became more master of myself, and correspondingly stronger in mind. For a long period this task of collecting my forces, which I had at an early stage recognised as the main problem of my self-education, was made more difficult by the weakness of my nerves; every effort was followed by a collapse, which to some extent confined me to superficiality.' His powers of memory are bad. 'I really cannot remember any single event or fable. Conversely, however, I seem to be incapable of forgetting a general connection; I only have a memory for details during moments of productive tension.' He has no direct sensibility for art. 'The more art I see which is nothing but art, the more conscious am I of my peculiar disposition which allows me to appreciate art only as the immediate expression of metaphysical reality. For that reason truly great art means more to me than to the majority

of its admirers, but I cannot do justice to small art, and many a masterpiece appears to me as such. Especially the purely decorative leaves me cold. . . . Generally, I know well enough how to appreciate superficiality, only I am not able to do so in the case of art, and this proves that I lack certain organs. It proves, above all, a lack of culture. The explanation is not far to seek: possibly nowhere in Europe is there such an inartistic atmosphere as in my home. . . .' And in another place he observes: 'By nature I lack every feeling for the arts and crafts.' At the bottom of this indifference to art is a curious conceit. If a work of art 'is constantly before me, it disturbs me, and all the more so the greater its own merit is. Then I have to consider it, to adjust the style of my life to a work of art; above all, my imagination is not at liberty in such a presence. How am I to unearth thoughts without hindrance from unconscious depths, if the space before me is not empty, if my senses are caught up again and again in something perfect outside myself? . . . I would, of course, mind if my lady friends did not make their surroundings as beautiful as possible, for when I am with them my consciousness is turned to the outer world, and suffers from any of its insufficiencies . . .' This is subjectivity as a fine art, and like all art it merely makes the artist aware of the unattainable. It makes Count Keyserling aware of 'The singular tragedy of my existence'. 'Even in my childhood I was surprised that, as a person, I was unchangeable; I felt myself to be so little identical with "myself", I knew myself as capable of such unlimited transformations, that it would have seemed more natural to me if my body had behaved just like the products of my fancy, which appeared sometimes thus and sometimes differently, according to my mood. . . . Never, throughout the whole of my life, have I felt myself to be identical with my person, nor regarded what is personal as essential; never felt myself affected by what I was and did, what I suffered and what happened to me. And for years I have striven to burst the fetters of definite existence, to manifest myself as I knew myself to be.' 'Why am I not a god?' he asks, and answers: 'Only because I am wanting in physical strength; it is the available quantity of energy, and nothing else, which differentiates the metaphysician from God. If I possessed sufficient power, then my ideas would, of their own accord, become physical manifestations, and, as my thoughts wandered, one world would succeed another.'

It will be seen that Count Keyserling is only a philosopher in the loose sense of the word: indeed, he renounces the science of knowledge and poses as a poet of ideas. He asks us to read his book 'like a novel', for his avowed object in writing it was to find 'a means of self-expression'. In the foreword to the second edition of an earlier book, *Das Gefüge der Welt*, he has found even more precise analogies for this later book: 'Auch das *Reisetagebuch* ist rein musikalisch komponiert, d. h. die verschiedenen geistigen Tonarten und Tempi haben sich mir aus musikalischem Instinkt heraus ergeben.'

There is something very distressing in such an open abuse of analogy, especially with its implied confusion of thought and sensibility. But the German mind seems peculiarly fond of this illicit method—one that Lessing did not succeed in eradicating from their criticism. An Englishman prefers to keep his categories distinct even whilst perceiving relationships—and we confess to this preliminary prejudice because we are anxious to do justice to a book which has not been altogether fairly treated by the English press. For with all its faults, it is an impressive book.

It may easily be imagined in what mood the subjective philosopher begins his journey round the world. 'Europe has nothing more to give me. Its life is too familiar to force my being to new developments. . . . I want to let the climate of the tropics, the Indian mode of consciousness, the Chinese code of life and many other factors, which I cannot envisage in advance, work their spell upon me one after the other, and then watch what will become of me.' A mind so 'willing' meets a common fate. Lacking any objective standard of judgment, it is seduced by every profundity it encounters. As he goes on his way, Count Keyserling surrenders himself to every spiritual nostrum in turn, unconscious of any loss of dignity entailed. Thus Theosophy and Buddhism, New Thought and Confucianism, Mormonism and Catholicism, are all treated with the same ponderous enthusiasm. The real value of the book lies in the many objective judgments of fact which the author, from time to time forgetting the existence of his soul, can make. Then an unprejudiced and intelligent observer throws a new light on common factors. We would particularly note his frequent observations on the English character, and his account of the sane sexual habits of the Japanese.

The one tendency that emerges from all Count Keyserling's observations and experiences may best be expressed by the word *orientalism*. This appears not as a direct advocacy of the philosophies of the East, but implicitly, from their standpoint, as a reflection on the adequacy of Western thought. But this comparison is only made effective by ignoring one half—and that the most significant half—of Western thought. Keyserling identifies Western thought with that particular subjectivist trend of which he is the outcome. Now this particular trend sees the East through rose-coloured spectacles: its peculiar heresies are of Eastern origin, or at any rate derive a great deal of encouragement from the East. Let us recall Schopenhauer's claim on behalf of his master: 'It was reserved for Kant to carry victoriously into Europe and its philosophy that profound idealistic vision common to all Asia apart from Islam, and dominating its very religion.' If we were required to point to a philosophy worked out in the terms of Western reality and consonant with our deepest instincts, we should turn to mediæval philosophy and particularly to the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas. That is not to say so much as that we shall find in St. Thomas a Western philosophy for all

time; but we shall find there an attitude and a method more fruitful for our purposes than those of Buddha or Confucius. And it may be suggested that our efforts, and especially the efforts of our philosophers, could with more profit be turned towards an elucidation of the content and an interpretation of the system of scholasticism than towards these idle 'adventures of the soul' among oriental mystics. Henri Massis,<sup>1</sup> who perhaps best expresses in France a very natural opposition to this trend of orientalism, has observed: 'Le caractère de l'Occident, c'est la *distinction*; et le programme de la pensée occidentale est assez bien rassemblé, dès les hautes époques, par la sentence classique d'Anaxagore: "Au début tout était confondu; l'intelligence vint et mit chaque chose en ordre." C'est de la vue de cet ordre, des hiérarchies intellectuelles qu'il comporte, de la vue des ressemblances et des différences, des identités et des distinctions, que résulte, par un processus à la fois rationnel et naturel, ce mouvement général, et, en particulier, ce développement de la *personne humaine* qui frappe, dès l'abord, dans l'histoire de l'Occident.'

All this Keyserling ignores, and in his ignorance he is true to his race; for if his immediate origins are as near the shallows as Houston Stewart Chamberlain, they reach without intermission right back to the profounder depths of Kant. To deny the objective reality of the content of knowledge can only lead to this now too familiar cult of the self—to this gospel of inwardness, to this denial of the validity of science, to 'the ideal of personal perfection as opposed to that of professional efficiency'. And so Keyserling can write, before he gives adventurous freedom to his soul: 'To-day no fact as such troubles me any more. I am not fond of reading, I hardly need my fellow men, and I am tending more and more towards the life of a hermit, in which shape I can doubtlessly fulfil my destiny better than in any other.' This is the same solitary voice that once broke the silence of the groves at Ermenonville! Significantly enough, Keyserling never once mentions the name of Rousseau. For these precious 'souls' are jealous of their exemplars, and would not willingly admit that they appear from time to time *as a type*, whose only effect is to cloud for a while the clear stream of thought.

It is perhaps the seeming hopelessness of our opposition that adds bitterness to these observations on Keyserling's book. A revival of the scholastic attitude seems very remote, especially in England, where there is not even the promise of a corresponding art, as in France. One thinks, finally, of the worldly fate of Keyserling's book, of its immense popularity in Germany. It does not seem destined for this popularity in England: in France it will

<sup>1</sup> In an excellent symposium on the subject published in *Les Cahiers du Mois* (Nos. 9-10: 'Les Appels de l'Orient,' p. 36). Paris (E'mile-Paul). 1925. Price: 10 fr.



meet with sufficient opposition. Nevertheless, it is a portent. But before we could venture to interpret it, we should need a very intimate knowledge of the components of its popularity in Germany. It might reflect either of two opposed moods. It might reflect the hunger and desperation of those material forces which endow modern Germany with its indefinite vitality. Or it might indicate how deeply and how widely the subjectivism of German philosophy has permeated into the mentality of the German people. Only the second eventuality need induce despair.

HERBERT READ

*Keats and Shakespeare.* By J. Middleton Murry. Humphrey Milford (Oxford University Press). 14s. net.

Mr. Middleton Murry's prose makes some little minds cross: and this is not to be wondered at, for they feel that in his wrestlings, sometimes truly painful, to express in prose what poetry alone can express, he is despising their placidity and assurance—that, like some mountaineer, looking down from a difficult crag and wondering how people can go on playing tennis, he is arrogant. They complain of his implied retort to their assertion that there are many kinds of truth: 'Well, my kind is Shakespeare's.' To that only Shakespeare could reply effectively. Indeed, Mr. Murry's style is not always happy: in it, occasionally, as in some of César Franck's music, there is a 'seated one day at the organ' effect which repels, not because it is false, but because expression has been inadequate to feeling. The 'grand Amen' is left rather menacingly in the air. But how foolish to be irritated by an imperfection, by a touch of nature, when there is so much to admire! Absolute sincerity, deep sensibility, passionate conviction, the love of what is best, and a profound loyalty to apprehended truth are things not so often found united in a modern writer. They are united in Mr. Middleton Murry, and no book of his has more completely proved them than this study of Keats as the type of great poet. The man who can read it without finding much new value added to his experience is, in a manner, to be envied, unless—as seems more likely—he is to be commiserated. When I reflect upon the applause that was lavished on M. André Maurois' *Ariel*—that shallow and facile caricature of Shelley—I find those critics truly unfortunate who have failed to see in 'Keats and Shakespeare' an immeasurable superiority. The imaginative reconstruction of a great poet's inner development needs very different qualities to those of Colonel Bramble's creator: it needs an intensity like Mr. Murry's. To look deeply into a poet's soul, into the living and changing core from which the germs of his poetry sprang, a man must have looked deeply into his own soul.

I feel that Mr. Middleton Murry has done this and that, though the results as regards his personal convictions about humanity and the universe may not be universally, or exactly, valid for everybody, he has succeeded in recreating, from the interior, a universal picture of a great poet's personality developing and dilating with experience. And the picture is not in the least abstract, but made up from the flesh and blood, the sufferings and struggles and victories of that stupendous young man, whose mind was so ripe at twenty-three that the number of his years means nothing to us. Without Keats' letters, which are more amazing than any poem he lived to write, Mr. Murry, of course, could not have written his book: but out of them, the poems and all other witness he has woven an intensely absorbing narrative, moving, convincing and tragic, which entirely justifies his attempt and lifts it above any serious damage, even from just and successful criticism of detail.

Upon criticism of detail I do not propose to dwell in this short space, since such criticism, so far as I am concerned, would largely resolve itself into the general regret that Mr. Murry—to apply the words of the Poet Laureate written in praise of Keats—cannot 'with single and apparently effortless expression' more often 'rejoice the æsthetic imagination'. There are passages where he labours heavily, with over-insistence, over-emphasis and repetition which were not essential. If all the chapters had been as firm, vivid and well-marshalled as Chapter VIII. on Keats' love and Chapter XI., 'The Final Struggle,' it would have been difficult to find words in which to praise the book adequately. With what warm justice he displays Keats' passion and with what dramatic force he reveals that last agonised transformation of the poet's spirit when he forsook his last refuge from the pain of life, and wrote to Reynolds: 'I have given up Hyperion!' 'Shakespeare,' says Mr. Murry, 'had triumphed in Keat's soul.' And this brings us to the title, the guiding idea, and such criticism of the book as may be concerned with fundamentals.

'This book grew, as Mr. Murry explains, out of a study of Shakespeare as the supreme type of human soul. In the course of this study, he says: 'I had come to assume a whole system of correspondences between purely poetic imagery and the steps of discursive thinking . . . which I could not reasonably require other minds to assume without a demonstration. . . . I saw that my one chance of making intelligible these slowly formed convictions of mine concerning Shakespeare was to use the greatest of his successors, John Keats, as though he were a mediator between the normal consciousness of men and the pure poetic consciousness in which form alone Shakespeare remains to us.' To realise all that Shakespeare means to Mr. Murry we must await the sequel, but one may say shortly that he represents the most perfect type of human being—namely one who has reached, through 'loyalty' to intense experience, a state of gnosis, or God-like knowledge,

in which all life appears an accepted harmony. The guiding idea of this book is to show how Keats himself, a poet admittedly of Shakespeare's type, confessedly a worshipper of Shakespeare, first realised and eventually attained this same supreme state, in which, had he lived, he too would have written those dramas—his announced ambition—that would have been, like Shakespeare's, the expression of the highest poetic consciousness. In this narrative of Keats's last four years, Mr. Murry, without at all straining the evidence marshals and expounds Keats' poems and letters to produce an extraordinary conviction that he has, indeed, read Keats' mind faithfully.

Keats did not use mystical phraseology in his letters, but it is quite obvious that in these four years he went through, and confessed, profound spiritual experiences, and that his conception of Shakespeare as poet, man and guiding spirit, was something like Mr. Murry's. Mr. Murry, whether we accept his particular religion or not, helps us to see what these experiences were, and how Keats' work, from 'Sleep and Poetry' to the great odes and the abandoned 'Hyperion', expressed and revealed them. Working always with an earnest fidelity, he has succeeded in giving us a profounder understanding of Keats the man and of the inner inspiration of the poems. Incidentally, his criticism of the poems, particularly of 'Hyperion', is very penetrating. How he would have treated the poems, had there been no letters, we must wait for his work on Shakespeare to observe. Keats is isolated here, both as man and poet, except from Shakespeare. The contemporary atmosphere is hardly mentioned, allusion to contemporary poetry is scant, and even Keats' own poems are not considered as things in themselves, as unembodied æsthetic expressions, but mainly as documents. This is, therefore, only incidentally a work of criticism or literary disputation, and that is why I choose to praise it for what it chiefly is, a profoundly moving, faithful and yet revealing narrative. One might argue for ever about certain fundamental premises and conclusions, but, in truth, there is no arguing about admittedly non-rational convictions. All one can do is to state an equally strong conviction, equally inexpressible, that the absolute knowledge is not only a cloudy mystery, but also a sunlit clarity; and that there is a type of human mind and human art which reflects, with a value that is impossible to calculate, this absolute serenity and perfect precision. But that is by the way. What Mr. Murry has done is to insist, with a just vehemence, that Keats invariably meant what he said and knew what he meant; and those who are doubtful on either point will do very well to ponder his admirable book.

And there is no passage to which we should more heartily subscribe than that on page 144, where, after an impassioned defence of Keats' homogeneity and grasp of truth, Mr. Murry glances scornfully at certain sham truths of our day and concludes:

'One way, and perhaps the surest way towards the supersession of these

sham truths by a real one, is to take great poetry seriously. It is not an easy way; by no means as easy as it sounds. In order to advance along it we have sooner or later to take the *salto mortale*, the perilous leap. We have to take seriously knowledge that is not, and by its own nature cannot be, expressed in propositions; we have to believe that such knowledge exists and that men have possessed it in the past, and that they can possess it to-day. If we can make the leap, all will in the last resort be well; if we cannot, then, the greatest poet will remain for us the "idle singer of an empty day."

That is true, with the reservation in that our leap may not always land us exactly on the spot where Mr. Murry would have us alight. There is relativity even in these things. It is interesting to note that Count Hermann Keyserling makes for the philosopher the very claim that Mr. Murry makes for the supreme poet. Surely, the fact is that no human being can pronounce on absolute value: it is enough that a man should express his own deep convictions as completely as possible. His concentration upon that aim, besides his knowledge and sensibility, is what makes Mr. Murry's work important.

ORLO WILLIAMS

*Milton: Man and Thinker.* By Denis Saurat. (Cape) 15s. net.

It is necessary to open these remarks by referring to the 'Renaissance' conception of Milton, which, though not of course entirely novel, has given rise during the last seven or eight years to a considerable literature in America and on the Continent. England is a little behind the times in Miltonic scholarship (this is stated without prejudice!): the work of Professor J. S. Smart of Glasgow, and M. Saurat's *La Pensée de Milton* (1920) which was known in this country before its incorporation in the present volume are mainly independent of this movement, though all are part of a combination or conspiracy to 'de-Massonise' Milton. The theory is, briefly, that the poet should be regarded as a Renaissance thinker and artist, not as a Puritan. In America, Mr. Edwin Greenlaw has found an anticipation in Spenser of Milton's views of free-will in man proceeding from and heightening moral responsibility; and the origin of some of Milton's semi-ontological ideas in the filtered and (to our sense) debased Neo-Platonism of the Italian Renaissance. Mr. J. H. Hanford revalues the epic 'in terms of humanism': but does not seem to have achieved much that is new. Mr. R. D. Havens reassures us that Milton's supposed theory of woman's inferiority ('He for God only, she for God in him') is not due to an austere Puritan contempt. There are also attempts (such as Mr. M. A. Larson's demonstration of the influence of Milton's *Divorce* tracts on Farquhar's *Beaux' Stratagem*!) to show Milton's centrality in English thought—which in literature *was*, of course, predominantly moulded by the Renaissance, and not of its nature

theological—by tracing his influence on later writers. But Milton's literary influence was disconcertingly negative: the fact is a deadly testimony to his spiritual isolation.

In Sweden, Mr. S. B. Liljegren, an eminent Miltonic scholar, considers Milton's character to be a complex product of 'Machiavellism allied with Stoicism', the Renaissance fused with Calvinism, and concludes that 'The force of Milton's inspiration was supplied by the passions dominating his soul and his surroundings'. With this M. Saurat is 'in entire accord'—and so are we. If this were not so Milton would be much more unlike other poets even than he is. The rest of the prodigious pamphleteering both in America and Europe is in the nature of *scholia* depending on these books, and adding a few minor biographical facts.

The old idealization of Milton as a kind of orthodox saint was of course absurd. There was no force in the legend that the author of poetry so richly sensuous was in spirit a narrowly rigid Puritan or Stoic. No man could ever become a great poet were his spiritual vision confined by any creed or any philosophy. Milton was in life a rebel against all sects, Presbyterian, Episcopalian, or Roman Catholic. He was the wholly unorthodox descendant of a line of dissenters and 'heretics'. The all-pervading forces in his disposition were pride and the sense of moral responsibility: 'forever in my great Taskmaster's eye,' whence his irresistible will to liberty. In these things he wanted all men to be as himself: came actually to see the likening of them to himself as the Divine purpose. But, in the broad sense, he was a Puritan. His *thought* was always first and lastly, theological; that is the cause of his differences from his literary contemporaries. His attitude to life was religious: he repressed other impulses, even the impulse of pure art, so soon as they became conscious. He took liberties with an uncongenial theology; but he did so in the belief that he was an ontological enquirer. He wrote much that is not very 'holy'; but always in the belief that in fostering his greatness as thinker and artist he was helping to justify the ways of God to man. His life was intensely austere and ascetic. All this makes him a 'Puritan'; something immeasurably removed from the Cavalier spirit, from any other religious fashion prevalent in his day and deriving from Renaissance Italy, from the comparatively unreligious spirit that pervades Elizabethan, Jacobean and Caroline literature—itself far nearer to the Renaissance than was Milton.

No man so scholarly as Milton could have failed to show traces of his reading among Renaissance writers. The wonder is that he did not show more; the fact points, if anywhere, to a deliberate suppression of modern influences. So it is a little disconcerting to find all these foreign gentlemen setting out thus laboriously a thesis which in itself needs no proof; but does, inevitably, o'erleap itself to the confusion of one's ideas about the main impulses of Milton's poetry and 'thought'. It is rather as if, because Mr.

Hardy is of a certain period and his work is atheistic yet individually and not simply so; everybody were to set about revaluing him 'not as an atheist but as a Romantic Revivalist thinker'. For instance, this commotion as to Milton's not being a Calvinist. M. Saurat makes the mistake, pardonable in a foreign scholar in whom so little has to be pardoned, of greatly over-estimating the sway of Calvinism in this country in the early seventeenth century. He knows that Milton's conviction of man's freewill and moral responsibility utterly excluded Calvinism from his mind; but he applauds Mr. Liljegren, who finds it needful to 'fuse' Machiavelli and the Renaissance with Calvinism to account for the defeat of the latter, as if all religious thought before the Renaissance were Calvinistic. The *essence* of Milton does not derive from the essential features of the Renaissance. It is difficult to prove a negative: but the only real way to approach the question is to compare Milton critically with the traditions of his own and the preceding age in literature, and any of their exemplars. For these men were, broadly speaking, 'Renaissance thinkers' in English literature. The comparison will show why we call Milton a Puritan; and real critical problems will begin to emerge. The relation between 'thought' and poetry; and the question of what kind of thought is relevant to poetry, are matters to which we must return.

M. Saurat is not primarily a literary critic. Indeed, one or two of his literary judgments, such as 'Milton is essentially lyrical' and 'Milton is a greater poet than Shakespeare on this theme of human nature. Shakespeare gets his effects at times of crisis and tragedy, when effects grow cheap, whereas Milton reaches his on ordinary themes, common to the whole of mankind in ordinary circumstances not peculiar to haughty aristocrats of the spirit' make us all the more glad of the angle of approach he has chosen. He has not written on the nature of epic, lyric, and drama; nor on that of spiritual aristocracy in art. But he has given us a scholarly book, interesting and valuable. It has, in a serious sense of that misused word, charm. The translator is so extremely able that one can hardly realise he is translating. The book contains, firstly, an account of Milton's character and early years. Secondly, an interpretation of his 'System' as worked out in the great poems. Thirdly, an account of what the author believes to be the sources of Milton's thought. Frankly, we think that M. Saurat, himself a good deal the intellectualist, rather over-estimates Milton's *intellect* throughout. But he shows the poet to have held a coherent theology, a conception of the relation between God and man which, if not deeply philosophical, makes the content of *Paradise Lost* more understandable. In *La Pensée de Milton* he was the first to make proper use of the neglected *De Doctrina*, which summarizes the Scheme which is worked into the epic.

M. Saurat starts by demonstrating how human was Milton, how much more personal the emotion of his art than is supposed. 'Milton was one

in all his activities' is convincing; but M. Saurat asserts a workable point of view rather than makes a criticism when he says:

'His ideas are an interpretation of life which has not been built in the abstract by speculation, but which has been the result of the passing through life of a highly sensitive man—a man of high intelligence also—to whom life brought revelations about himself, his ambitions and his cause.'

Milton was a sensitive if rather arrogant child; full of that pride 'which is next neighbour to humility'.

'When I was yet a child, no childish play  
To me was pleasing'

he wrote of himself as of Christ: this is not remarkable in the very studious boy whose household were joined in the 'unique conspiracy' as M. Saurat calls it, of bringing him up to be a great poet. His greatness was taken for granted. He seems not to have emerged from this slightly priggish stage till the years of retirement at Horton, after he abandoned the University and the thought of Holy Orders. M. Saurat shows the earnest scholar as something of a dandy too; indulging in an occasional 'frisk' on his visits to London, and experiencing one or two mild love-affairs. He was stirred from the composition of the early poems to violent activity as a pamphleteer by the religious dissensions, which brought him into prominence and made him a public character at the Civil War. He dissented from all sects by turn, but most detested the 'whore of Babylon', Rome. We cannot find so many important ideas in the countless pamphlets as does M. Saurat: but certainly they acquit Milton of any lofty personal detachment. The *Divorce* pamphlets reflect painfully the first real shock of his life; his repulse by his young bride, Mary Powell. It was about this time that chastity, to appear later in the epic as the symbol of Reason's triumph over Passion, began to occupy his mind. M. Saurat has little to say of the poet's life after the heroic sacrifice of eyesight in writing *Pro populo Anglicano* in a few weeks to save the face of the Commonwealth. M. Saurat has, however, in an appendix, collaborated with an oculist on the causes of Milton's eye-trouble, and concluded on evidence that seems to us rather slender that it was due to congenital syphilis.

M. Saurat's estimate of Milton the man is very good and careful, perhaps the best that has been written; but, faithful to the Renaissance and anti-Puritan theory, he strains things rather far in trying to make the poet out a sprightly fellow. Honestly, we can find nothing of this element: the humour is heavy and tasteless, even the joy in beauty is always aloof and austere—*L'Allegro* is not really a jolly poem! Of the prose polemics M. Saurat thinks, not highly indeed, but, putting aside their vigour and erudition, more highly than we can understand. The attitude of 'I care not to dispute philosophy with this pork' is repellent; but what is more important is that he does

not dispute philosophy at all with seriousness. M. Saurat, not alone, praises an eloquence and loftiness of style, but in our impenitent view Milton is a turgid, formless prose-stylist, difficult to read and never great except in a few detached phrases that ring like poetry. That does not affect, of course, the high value of M. Saurat's new study of the pamphlets.

Milton's scheme, outlined in the *De Doctrina* and worked into the epic, is thus summarized by M. Saurat:

(1) The idea of God as the un-manifested Infinite, in whom is the Son (Creator and Creation), in whom is Christ (the elect).

(2) The idea of free-will, liberated by the retraction of God, and the union of the idea of reason to the idea of liberty, which is an original proof of freewill (intelligence is impossible without free will).

(3) The idea of Matter as good, imperishable and divine, a part of God himself from which all things issue spontaneously; so that there is no soul, and all beings are part of God, arranged on an evolutionary scheme.

(4) The idea of the duality of man: reason and passion; the necessity of the triumph of reason, the fall as the triumph of passion.

(5) The idea of liberty, based on the goodness of the normal being made of divine matter and on the presence in the elect of the Divine intelligence.

This scheme, which survives the closest examination in the light of the epic, is not only of considerable interest in itself, but actually aids the poetry: since poetry itself keeps a firmer grasp on the mind when the underlying thought is coherent. It is *not* such thought, we insist, which makes poetry: poetry does not interpret a 'meaning', but creates its own meaning through a series of æsthetic perceptions that do not spring from, but erect themselves into, a definite series of ideas. Artistic intuition is moral and emotional as well as intellectual: the beauty of Milton's poetry is not in his scheme of thought, but is a spontaneous thing that draws coherency from such a framework. This scheme of Milton's, it should be carefully noted, is not an inherent 'philosophy' such as Wordsworth's, is not itself a sufficing poetical view of the universe. Milton was not a romantic.

Milton is now shown to have a coherent Cosmology, allied to a significant Religion; but—with all respect to M. Saurat—we cannot agree in crediting him with a real Scheme in Ontology, Psychology, or Politics. His basic idea (the source of free-will) is God's retraction.

'Though I, uncircumscribed myself, retire,  
And put not forth my goodness, which is free  
To act or not; necessity and chance  
Approach me not, and what I will is fate.'

(Hence the Divine irony.) This idea M. Saurat has traced conclusively enough to the Kabbalah, which he has explored thoroughly and fruitfully in his search for Milton's sources.



God, the Absolute, is non-manifested. Milton accepted, indeed, the *incomprehensibility* of God, both in the *De Doctrina* and the epic, and anticipated some German philosophy; he even englimpsed the Irrationalism of Schelling. The Relative, the Son, is manifested: there is always a gulf between. Milton's answer to the real riddle, the formation of matter 'out of Chaos', is clouded, not uncharacteristically, in vague poetic magnificence.

'Dove-like, sat'st brooding on the vast Abyss  
And madest it pregnant.'

A pious reticence, perhaps; for Milton believed in the inherent goodness and permanence of matter. He had no further belief in separate and immortal spirit. This severs him of course from Neo-Platonism; though M. Saurat has no difficulty in leading backwards through the Materialists and Robert Fludd to Pico della Mirandola and thence to the Kabbalah. Milton was not a great or original philosopher; but then, he had no need to be.

The freedom of man to shape his own destiny is the assumption that leaves *Paradise Lost* the battleground between Reason and Passion.

'They themselves ordained their fate,'

says God. Man is a free agent; but his heritage is dualistic: the struggle of reason against passion, of chastity against sin, of Milton against Satan: this is the story of humankind as symbolized in the epic. Milton, not Satan, says M. Saurat, is the hero of *Paradise Lost*; and *Paradise Regained* is by comparison a poor thing, for it substitutes a half-realised and half-embodied intellectual concept for an incarnate morality. Were M. Saurat thinking chiefly of literature he would, we fancy, modify this judgment somewhat.

Those who are really interested in Milton's Cosmology should of course read M. Saurat's excellent work: but the process of the system baldly reduces to this sequence: God: the eternal plan of Wisdom: the Son: the Fall: the Elect: Christ: Regeneration: Christian liberty: the Communion of Saints: Resurrection: Final Perfection: Hell. M. Saurat has found much that relates to the Cosmology in the *Zohar*, the Kabbalah and even Robert Fludd—whose chequered life and Latinity may still interest a few. Milton's absorption, at one phase, in the Mortalists was perhaps obvious enough before; though it casts a significant light on the nature of his pre-occupations.

Milton did not think, nor does M. Saurat lead us to think of him, chiefly in æsthetic or humanistic terms. His philosophy was worthy of a scholarly man of considerable intellectual power; but it does not reveal a great abstract thinker, nor does it enrich our understanding of human life in the same way as the less specific, more enquiring 'thought' of the great romantic poets.

The *poiesis*, the creative element in Milton's verse, the literary beauty that is conveyed is far less in his 'philosophy' than in the splendour, visual, sensuous, musical, descriptive that inevitably adorned all this unique poetic stylist touched. Milton's intellect was mainly unpoetical in its workings, his *genius* was singularly free of intellectual preoccupation or spiritual disquiet. The two elements (this bald division is serviceable, if not quite exact) were less fused in him than in any other of our major poets; that is why his most striking quality, his sheer magniloquence, is so untrammelled. That is why his purest poetry seems most cold, most detached from the perturbation and solace of the human soul. But his 'difference', his limitations, his artificiality are the very condition of his supremacy. A heroic and a profoundly moral character, his poetic achievement is less spiritual in essence than that of the four or five English poets who can be ranked with him. He was far more classical, more aloof *æsthetically* than they. It would indicate the central difference (very roughly indeed) to say that while in the great romantics, Shakespeare or Wordsworth or Keats, 'thought' and expression were abstract, indivisible and usually incomplete, Milton's thought and his expression were both more concrete, and yet made their most complete impression when the one transcended and escaped from the other. But it would require a small treatise to develop this seeming paradox into a critical evaluation. The root of the matter, which affects classicism and romanticism in general and Milton in particular, is that there is a real difference between a poetic presentation of life and a poetic questioning of life.

M. Saurat does help towards a literary estimate of Milton, by the implications of what he has not attempted as well as by what he has done. He sees the Renaissance in semi-theological terms; and tends to miss its dominant spiritual factors. He and his *confrères* have advanced an interesting thesis; but it is incomplete and so, being short of the truth, may unconsciously obscure it. The point is that for these scholars the literary history of England between the Renaissance and Milton does not exist. It is notable that Milton himself sets this fashion; rarely is he concerned with the poetry of the great period he followed, never with the reborn critical thought that was exercising his more typical contemporaries; with what the Dutch contend, or what the French. In that way he is the less 'of his age'; his poetry itself, in its purer moments, is curiously timeless. He set an example that none were likely to follow: but in the epic and *Samson Agonistes* he gave English literature its one sustained work, of the 'lofty' order, of which the final impression is, not the passionate spiritual challenge of romanticism, but classic detachment and serenity,

'And calm of mind, all passion spent.'

## THE ATLANTEAN HYPOTHESIS

*Atlantis in America.* By Lewis Spence. (Benn) 10s. 6d. net.

The love of the unknown and the marvellous is no doubt the root-cause for the propagation of the theory that a submerged continent in the Atlantic was inhabited by highly cultured beings who, when their country began to sink, migrated both east and west and founded the pre-Columbian civilization of America. One may ask why the Atlantean hypothesis is of comparatively recent growth and how it was that the Victorians avoided burning their fingers with it. The answer, I think, is twofold. The spread of occultism and kindred pseudo-sciences, healthy in that they reflect a reaction against the hopelessness and aridity of neo-Darwinian doctrine and the thought-binding categories of Church discipline, unhealthy for more obvious reasons, does encourage parallel speculations about the lost continent of Atlantis. The Theosophists, I believe, are Atlanteans almost to a man—and woman. Secondly, interest in the origin of civilization is much more widely diffused than it used to be and ethnology is becoming less and less of an academic research. The Baconian heresy could hardly have existed but for the modern intensive study of Elizabethan literature; no matter what Plato, the originator of the Atlantis myth, had to say, the Baconians of anthropology would never have gone trawling for Atlantis if the eyes of science had not begun to pierce the mists of pre-history and its brain to dispose of the comfortable old dogmas of the independent and spontaneous evolution of civilized communities.

Mr. Spence is an acknowledged authority on early American cultures and brings a patient industry to his investigations. Unhappily, the power of criticism is not equally manifest in his labours. Let us watch how he sets about salvaging a drowned civilization that has left not a wrack behind. We need not query the existence of an Atlantic continent of which Mr. Spence claims the Antilles as the surviving fragment. The point is whether the final submergence occurred when man was a baby or after he had founded an Atlantean civilization. Mr. Spence does not know; nobody knows, though all the probabilities, of course, point to the disappearance of Atlantis before the dawn of the Pleistocene period. The writer's general case is that the Cro-Magnons, the palaeolithic cave-dwellers of France and Spain, were the first wave of Atlantean immigrants, the Azilian-Tardenoisian peoples who founded (*sic*) European civilization the second and the Mayans who established the first civilizations of Guatemala, Honduras and Yucatan were the third, passing into America from sinking 'Antillia.' Mr. Spence claims an utterly unwarranted continuity of culture between these three waves, for the Cro-Magnons were pure 'food-gatherers' and left no traces whatever when the builders of the megaliths arrived in Western Europe, while the Azilians did not practise agriculture as Mr. Spence declares. If Mr. Spence consults Mr. Gordon Childe's *Dawn of European Civilization*,

he will see that there is literally no evidence for questioning the fact that the Azilians were pure primitives and that they did not represent a transitional phase between the Old Stone Age and the New, the period of the megaliths, pottery, polished stone implements, tillage and the cult of the dead.

But the main portion of Mr. Spence's thesis is occupied with the Mayas, the third wave of immigrants from Atlantis. His method is perfectly simple and uniform. The similarities between the cultures of pre-Columbian America and the ancient civilizations of Egypt and the eastern Mediterranean are so numerous, their matrix is so elaborate and artificial that Prof. Elliot Smith and Mr. W. J. Perry after him, have concluded that the Mayas owed their high culture to a series of metal-hunting expeditions that worked their way east to America from the Mediterranean by way of India and the Pacific. Their contention gains force from the fact that there are no signs in America of any evolution from primitive to civilized conditions of life and that the Mayan civilization steadily degenerated from the time that it set foot in central America. Mr. Spence opens his Mayan exposition by ridiculing the possibility of any contact between Egypt and Honduras on the ground that the culture of the ancient East must have been modified in transit. The answer is that it was: some elements being dropped, others adapted to the new environment, and yet others retained in their original form. Since, therefore, he cannot accept the principle of diffusion from the ancient East, he accounts for the resemblances between the cultures of the New World and the Old by postulating their dissemination from a common centre, first east and then west. That centre was Atlantis. In fact, if you leave out Atlantis, a pure hypothesis, Mr. Spence's book is a sustained argument for the very *casus belli* against the evolution of indigenous cultures he derides.

He takes the Toltec tradition of the arrival of their culture-hero, Quetzalcoatl, from the East, and makes him an Antillian chief on the ground that he was connected with seismic disturbances—forgetting that so was the dragon, the symbol of divine kingship in the East. Quetzalcoatl was also a heavenly twin, like Plato's Atlas from Atlantis. But most of the Eastern 'Children of the Sun' were likewise heavenly twins. The American myths of the Flood were the transatlantic version of a common heritage in the Old World: to Mr. Spence they are a reminiscence of the Atlantic swallowing Atlantis. Corn-rites were the same in America as in Egypt and the Ægean; the Atlanteans stretched out one handful of corn to the west and another to the east. For Atlantis is the missing cultural link between the four continents. The parallels between the American and Egyptian ceremonies of mummification are stressed, but we evade the obvious conclusion by suggesting that the Cro-Magnon custom of painting the dead body with ochre was the prototype of the embalming ritual.

But perhaps the most glaring example of this method of arguing from hypothetical premisses is contained in the pages dealing with the famous

elephant sculpture on the Copan stele. The Cro-Magnons engraved naturalistic portraits of mammoths in the caves of the Dordogne; they came from Atlantis; therefore the Copan elephant is a mammoth, for we remember that the Cro-Magnons were the forerunners of the Mayas. In order, apparently, to make his supposition more plausible, Mr. Spence has reproduced the second Copan elephant, which is a less precise representation than the first. The first, which Mr. Spence does not reproduce, is not merely of an elephant, but of his Indian rider or mahout with turban and elephant goad, while the head of the elephant is carved with characteristic Indian ornamentation. Lastly, we may take the Pyramid for one more example of Mr. Spence's method of reasoning. First of all, he tells us that the Pyramid was made of brick; then, that it was introduced into Egypt by the dolmen-builders of western Europe who were stone-workers. The dolmen itself was apparently a degenerate Atlantean Pyramid, though the resemblances between them must escape the eye of all but an enthusiast like Mr. Spence.

Enough has been written to suggest that Mr. Spence is using threads of worsted to draw Atlantis from the bottom of the ocean. If only he had left his continent where it lies very comfortably and no bother to anybody, he would have written a serviceable book to supplement the researches of the 'Diffusionist' school of modern ethnology. The irrelevant intrusion of Atlantis into the scheme is like introducing the mermaid into a study of marine zoology.

H. J. MASSINGHAM

## TWO INTELLECTUALS

*Senlin.* Conrad Aiken. (Hogarth Press) 3s. 6d.

*First Poems.* Edwin Muir. (Hogarth Press) 4s. 6d.

The poetry of restraint, of emotional repression has in the last few years received notable adherents. The birth of this movement has been in the main Transatlantic, and may perhaps be attributed to a conscious reaction against the excessive sweetness in the American tradition. There have been two distinct attacks on literary easiness. With Ezra Pound, H.D., and the Imagists a resolute offensive was delivered on form. An attempt, not wholly unsuccessful, was made to prove that normal metrical tricks were unnecessary, and that poetry, when unadorned, was most adorned. Dullards, who did not recognise the exquisite balances in Pound's verse, reduced his discovery to babble, and we were presented by some of his followers with poetry not merely naked, but actually flayed.

That was the attack on form. The attack on substance was led by Mr.

T. S. Eliot, and he numbered among his host Richard Aldington and Conrad Aiken, to name only two of many. Mr. Eliot himself has endeavoured to invest verse with a pregnancy and a hardness that is Eastern in its esoteric intensity, but Western in that it is the intensity of free, and not trammelled, thought. In *The Waste Land* he contrived in a few hundred lines to write at least the chapter-headings of a few hundred volumes. It was a great achievement, but a dangerous example not only for others, but for himself. A point may well be reached when so much is said in so little that the meaning disappears altogether, or is only to be apprehended with the emotion which rewards the solution of a cross-word puzzle.

I do not say that Mr. Aiken has reached that point in *Senlin*. It must be remembered that this is not his most recent work, and that therefore no final conclusions can be derived from it. But a work of art must be judged by itself, and by itself, for me, *Senlin* confuses mystery with profundity. Do not let me be misunderstood. Like *The Waste Land*, *Senlin* is a relentless intellectual attempt to present a system of philosophy in the enchanted shorthand of verse, and, as that, more than a little is accomplished, but not enough. One is entitled, in the face of the bid for intellectual supremacy made by Mr. Aiken, to ask what his metaphysical system is, and when that question is pressed home there seems to be no reply, or only the murmur 'mysticism', a philosophic creed which I have always regarded as an *ignoratio elenchi*. 'Senlin' is a city; 'Senlin' is an ancient wood; 'Senlin' is a desert; 'Senlin' is where

‘Neighing far off in the haunted air  
The unicorns come down to the sea’;

‘Senlin’ watches the burial of his city’s dead; ‘Senlin’ is a tree

‘And among the pleasant leaves hang sharp-eyed birds  
While cruel roots dig downward secretly,’

‘Senlin’ is with the mummies of Cleopatra and Senebisto. ‘Senlin’ is all these things in his origins, but above all

‘a helpless gesture of mist above the grasses.’

It is with that helpless gesture that I quarrel, it is of that mist that I am shy. The arc of the mind is, or should be, hard and clear, because all that is durable and lucid is there created. But if the mind gestures helplessly in the mist, then we have exchanged thought, which is our own, for emotion which is everybody’s and nobody’s.

Nor does ‘Senlin’ break into the light with his ‘preoccupations’,

which are not less vulnerable because they are described in advance as futile.

'I am a room,' says 'Senlin', 'a house, a street, a town.' 'Senlin' ties his tie at the mirror but

'There are suns beneath the floor.'

'Senlin' sees a woman. Did she seek to attract him? He cannot guess, but, while he ponders, he smooths his hair and remembers the forbidden stairway up which he climbed with his sweetheart long ago. Then it is noon, and a street piano playing.

'Do not disturb my memories, heartless music!' 'Senlin' cries. It is evening.

'Death himself in the dusk gathering lilacs.'

Death approaches, says 'Senlin'. But 'Senlin' has yet time to climb 'the golden-laddered stair.'

'I ascend the golden-laddered hair  
of the harlot-queen of time.'

And now comes silence, 'Alone, in silence'.

Again beauty is spilt, almost indifferently as though Mr. Aiken were afraid of being caught with it about him. But it is a beauty in a mist, so we end with 'Senlin's' 'Cloudy Destiny':

'Yet we would say—this was no man at all;  
But a dream we dreamed, and vividly recall;  
And we are mad to walk in wind and rain,  
Hoping to find, somewhere, that dream again.'

That is exactly what you of all persons shouldn't say, Mr. Aiken. In the ultimate vision there are, or should be, no clouds, and since you are occupied with that go back and brush them away with the witches broom of your beauty.

Mr. Muir is also an intellectual, though in a different mode. While Mr. Aiken appears deliberately to choose his medium, and gives the impression of being able to write in any mode he may like, Mr. Muir makes it painstakingly, and sometimes almost painfully, clear that he is still the servant of his manner. The roughnesses are not wholly deliberate, the obscurities not always intentional, and his occasional failures to carry out his original scheme undesigned. But that is only to say, as he admits in his title, that these are 'First Poems.' As such they are encouraging, even exciting. In 'Betrayal', for example, he is able to refashion one of the oldest tragedies in the world thus:

'And nothing now of Beauty stays,  
 Save her divine and witless smile.  
 For still she smiles, and does not know  
 Her feet are in the snaring lime.  
 He who entrapped her long ago,  
 And kills her, is unpitying Time.'

That is new, vigorous, breathing, and there is much more as good, and as fresh in Mr. Muir's work. His difficulty, as I see it, will be perfectly to relate his sensibility, which is profound, to his power of expression, which is as yet uncomplete. If he can achieve a perfect unity, the result will be distinguished poetry.

HUMBERT WOLFE

*Daimon.* By E. L. Grant Watson. (Cape) 7s. 6d. net.

'Between me and the Spirit of the Universe something interposes which reaches beyond me, but is not the same as divinity. This something is my daimon.'

In the application of this passage as the sub-title to his story Mr. Grant Watson seems to express more truly what he really means than in any other part of the book. The reason for this would be that the most significant parts of the book are the accounts of the egotistical experiences of the chief character, and that this character, the wife to Martin O'Bryan, an Australian farmer, is not quite the right vehicle for the transmission of Mr. Grant Watson's ideas.

Martin O'Bryan, the husband, is the successful farmer of a lonely and isolated tract of desert. He is a man who is entirely in accord with his environment and who finds in the primitive Bush life all that is necessary to him. When Maggie marries him she feels that she will find all that is necessary to *her* in her wifehood, and after a year or so, after their only child is born, she realises that she has made a mistake. She is not essential to him. He loves her, but has his own life apart from her. Such a relationship cannot satisfy her. She makes attempts to get into touch with what he is in touch with, but the stern Bush life baffles and frightens her. If she should leave him, for *what* could she leave him? If she could get him to give up his desert life for what could he exchange it? Such is the theme of the story. In the first part of the book she suffers that he may be happy, crying out in her heart for him to need her, crying out for love of any kind, crying out for some indeterminable fulfilment of her life. In the second part they move to a more civilised area where the starkness of nature is in a manner clothed, and then it is he who suffers; and finally escapes back to the desert. He is pursued thence by Maggie, now an old woman, who in her unsuccessful search for him is no longer able to avoid that dreaded contact with nature.



She becomes an unspeakable old vagrant, wandering about the Bush eating the rankest food and drinking from any water-hole she can find. In the very end, of course, they meet again, in the wildest part of the desert when she is on the point of death. They recognise each other. She dies almost at once. In the morning he buries her. Then possessed with one last desire to be rid of all encumbrances he takes off his clothes and walks away into the desert singing to himself. (I am sorry that Mr. Grant Watson mentioned that he took off his clothes. It makes a sudden jarring ending to the easy sequence of his story.)

The story is well told. There are passages in it expressive of intense feeling. It does not strive for any effect other than to express as plainly as possible a definite significance. But the story as a whole does not quite do justice to the idea on which it is based. One is conscious all the time of a compromise between the elevation of the main theme and the inferiority of the characters who are expected to express it: and this compromise makes the characters unreal; they are not convincing. One wants on the one hand to release them from an obligation which is beyond their power to fulfil adequately; perhaps to make them primarily and finally representative of a certain type of married life. And one wants on the other hand to give Mr. Grant Watson's intrinsic idea into the hands of people who are possessed of a fundamentally superior consciousness.

I. P. FASSETT

*Ashe of Rings*. By Mary Butts. (Contact Editions—Paris).

The error of this book—that which makes one mistrust it—lies in the fact that it is so bewilderingly fluent, so *glib*. It responds successfully to many tests and yet fails in the end to seem really important. One part of the book is concerned with the practice of magic on a country estate, and the other with London war-time life. The latter is the more convincing, but the book as a whole is undoubtedly provoked by some genuine emotion. The manner of delivery is intense and artistic in effect. The various characters are interesting studies. The subject matter is handled delicately and with precision. Yet the whole utterance is in some curious way mechanical, lacking personality. It is like the communications of a medium.

*The Polyglots*. By William Gerhardi. (Cobden-Sanderson) 7s. 6d. net.

It is a pity that Mr. Gerhardi has published this novel as it stands now. Although more mature in style than *Futility* it is less significant, and *Futility* indicated promise that is not fulfilled in *The Polyglots*. It seems that Mr. Gerhardi has not really filled his basket before offering its contents to his public—or anyway he has not arranged it so that one can distinguish his wares. Perhaps he has not yet digested his experience properly. His accounts of life in the Far East during the war resemble the jottings in a diary. They are easy, graphic and frequently amusing.

# FOREIGN REVIEWS

## AMERICAN PERIODICALS

*The Yale Review*, July.—In *Assault upon the Poets* Professor Chauncey Brewster Tinker makes a somewhat oblique but timely protest against the present vogue for 'novelistic biographies'. He blames M. Maurois and Mr. Strachey for setting an example in an easily pervertible manner. 'M. Maurois' *Ariel* is a very readable book—has it not been a best seller?—but it hardly mentions Shelley's poetry. Perhaps we ought to concede that it has at least the merit of leaving untouched a subject which the author does not understand. French interpretations of Shelley's lyrics may, no doubt, be spared. But this is not the worst of the matter. The success of *Ariel* will establish a style of writing by which the lower levels of biography will be made so amusing that readers will hardly be won to lift their eyes to the hills and the infinite skies above'. This number also contains a long series of sketches by Mr. de la Mare in very mannered and occasionally incoherent prose, a solid article by Sir Arthur Salter on *War Risks in Economic Conflicts*, and some new letters about Poe of considerable biographical importance.

*The Modern Quarterly*, Vol. 2, No. 4.—The editor, Mr. V. F. Calverton, begins a series of articles on *Sex Expression in Literature*. This first instalment is mainly confined to introductory historical matters, but it looks a little as though the essay is going to suffer from a lack of definition of its subject-matter. 'Sex' in literature is not the same thing as pornography, nor is pornography the same thing as obscenity. It would be worth while considering how Casanova differs from Petronius, and both from Rabelais. There is, in each case, a different psychological motive, and Mr. Calverton will be rendering us a service if he disentangles these. Mr. Walter Long continues his useful history of the American drama, and Mr. J. B. Eggen writes an extremely interesting article on *The Decline of the Concept of Instinct*. He finds three main trends in recent psychology: 'the decline in importance attributed to instinct, as evidenced by a shift to other psychological and sociological principles, by a change in the nature of the unit instincts, and by the decreased amount of space devoted to the topic in recent texts; the gradual simplification of the number of instincts, with their consequent loss of utility through being too general, and the decline inferred in the diminished multiplicity of instincts; the identification of instinct with emotion and reflex and intelligence and habit, both in theory and practice, and the concept's consequent loss of entity and meaning. If these have been correctly interpreted, instinct psychology is passing out of modern science.'

*The Guardian* (A literary monthly published in Philadelphia), February to August.—We notice this magazine for the first time. It does not pretend to be 'hopelessly experimental', but it is not afraid of the more modern manifestations of the American spirit. Among the contributors are Waldo Frank, Gorham B. Munson, Kenneth Burke, Maxwell Bodenheim, and Robert McAlmon—all of whom are considerable writers. We would draw particular attention to Mr. Kenneth Burke's essay on *The Poetic Process* in the June number. In summary his conclusions may not be perfectly clear, but we give them for what they are worth: 'We have the original emotion, which is channelized into a symbol. This symbol becomes a generative force, a relationship to be repeated in varying details, and thus makes for one aspect of technical form. . . . The originating emotion makes for *emotional* consistency within the parts; the symbol demands a *logical* consistency within this emotional consistency. . . . The symbol faces two ways, for, in addition to the technical form just mentioned (an "artistic" value), it also applies to life, serving here as a formula for our experiences, charming us by finding some more or less simple principle underlying our emotional complexities. . . . In addition to the symbol, and the ramifications of the symbol, poetry also involves the *method of presenting* these ramifications.'

*Scribner's Magazine*, June to September.—In June and September Captain John W. Thomason, Jr., contributes two narratives based on his experiences with the Second American Division during the 1918 campaign. One is rather surprised to find such narratives presented with great circumstance in this popular magazine, for apart from the general supposition that the war is an unpopular subject, we find here an authenticity and realism which are, so far as I know, unique in American literature of the war, and pitifully scarce in European literature. It is true that Captain Thomason dishes up his realism with a certain amount of facetious vernacular, but this is overwhelmed by the vividness and actuality of the main narrative. The same magazine makes a 'regular feature' of Professor William Lyon Phelps, who happens to excel himself in the very numbers that contain Captain Thomason's narratives. For example:

'I suppose not a day passes that I do not think of Goethe. This morning as I was shaving with a new and particularly bad Gillette blade, something much sharper than the razor entered my head. Why is it that Goethe's opinions and ideas are so much more interesting than his sins? The average man is more attentive to a recital of the sensual indulgences of a literary genius than to his published works; indeed, many of our younger critics had a quite new interest in Wordsworth when it was discovered that he had an illegitimate child. But it is never so with Goethe. The history of his

girls is nothing like so thrilling as the history of his ideas. It is one more example of the triumph of mind over matter.'

The Professor's sense of humour may be judged from this extract:

'When D. H. Lawrence reads a French book, the sight of the feminine form of the adjective inflames him.'

*The American Mercury*, June to September.—There is a lot of very readable material in these four numbers, but perhaps nothing that calls for comment until we come to the September number. Here we have a vivid account by George Sterling, an intimate disciple, of the character and genius of Ambrose Bierce. 'The Forest Fire,' by Winifred Sanford, is an exceptionally good short story. We would like to quote from Mr. Mencken's review of a Baptist clergyman's novel, but perhaps its particular sweetness can be imagined. Instead, we will content ourselves with this character sketch, by A. L. S. Wood, of the Rev. J. Frank Chase, Secretary of the New England Watch and Ward Society, and one of the major forces in modern American life:

'The Rev. Mr. Chase is of good height, thick-set and obviously healthy. His round head sports a not luxuriant crop of tousled white hair; his grizzled moustache of walrus design masks a virtuous mouth; his eyes, even when open, hide behind the glaze of glasses. He came into this obscene and godless world in Boston, on March 7th, 1872, as the son of Jason Lincoln and Emma (Coutant) Chase, and was baptized Jason Franklin. Early in life, and to his abiding sorrow, he became privy to the words that are spoken and written in retired places where boys congregate. In due course, throwing off this evil, he found himself worthy of Wesleyan University, at Middletown, Connecticut, and there, in 1899, he earned the degree of bachelor of arts. Having a call to the consecrated life, he was ordained a pastor in 1900, and presently filled Methodist pulpits in Essex, West Roxbury and Allston. In 1907 he was called to the secretaryship of the New England Watch and Ward Society, and so abandoned the sacred desk. In 1901, Boston University gave him the rare degree of S.T.B., which means bachelor of sacred theology. During the war he was a member of the First Corps of Moral Engineers—shock troops, obviously. Now at 53, he is only a little discouraged, confessing that he puts more trust in God in his battles against the devil and less in his own righteousness. He is the author of *The "Dope" Evil*, a handbook for moral leaders. The quotation marks are his own.'

*The Century*, June to September.—The editor, Mr. Glenn Frank, has been appointed President of the University of Wisconsin, and he devotes his last three editorial articles to a summary of his hopes and fears for the future of Western civilisation. His conclusion is that 'western civilisation must choose between voluntary social control and involuntary social suicide.'

And the only sound social control will be a control in terms of the best knowledge that we have. The problem of our generation is to bring knowledge into contact with life and to make it socially effective.' He wants an 'evangelism of scholarship', a new body of Encyclopedists who will gather up the results of all the natural and social sciences and tabulate the result 'in what, for want of a better term, may be called a series of tentative dogmatisms upon which society can act until further research reveals wiser bases of action'. These articles are perhaps not remarkable for their profundity, but they are worth noting because they express a dominant mood in American thought, and one that is in striking contrast to the generalisations of corresponding minds in Europe.

*The Saturday Review of Literature* (weekly).—*Criticism in America*, by Maxwell Bodenheim (June 6th); *American Fiction*, by Virginia Woolf (August 1st).

Also received : *The Golden Galleon*; *The Literary Review*.

H. R.

## FRENCH PERIODICALS

I regret that, owing to an accident, I am compelled to omit the usual account of French periodicals from this number.

F. S. F.

## ITALIAN PERIODICALS

*Convegno*, August.—Only one number of the *Convegno*, the August number, has reached me. The most interesting thing in this number is an article by Lucien Dubech on *The Work and Crisis of the Vieux Colombier*. It may not be generally known that Jacques Copeau, who opened the *Vieux Colombier* with the intention of renovating French dramatic art, retired into the country, into the depths of Burgundy, apparently defeated. At least, the *Vieux Colombier* has closed its doors. M. Dubech asks why this has happened. His answer is that Copeau tried to do too much. Besides training his actors from the beginning—and he seems to have brought a rare competence to this task, besides having an extraordinarily poetical sense of the *mise en scène*—and in this branch of the production of plays, according to M. Dubech, Copeau displayed rare gifts and made real discoveries, he appears to have loaded himself with all the petty detail of theatrical administration. M. Dubech says that Copeau's gravest fault was that he was unable to recognise new talent. He mentions plays by Mazaud, Sarment, Amiel and Obey, Arnoux, Besnard, Romain, Duhamel, Clerc, and Pirandello,

all of which were offered first to Copeau and were rejected by him. The general impression left by M. Dubech's article is that Copeau was the puritan of his own ideas, and that his theories ruined him. M. Dubech ends by asking how long Copeau will remain in retirement. He quotes Desaix, who said, 'It is three o'clock; we have lost the battle; there's just time to win another.' Copeau is defeated; but the French drama needs him. Apparently, while he is away in the country, Copeau intends to produce Molière's farces before the peasants; and M. Dubech amusingly quotes Britannicus (it is translated into Italian, and I have not my Racine by me):

'Egli comincia, è vero, dove finì Augusto,  
Ma dubitate che, l'avvenire distruggendo il passato,  
Egli non finisca così come ha cominciato Augusto.'

Copeau, adds M. Dubech, finishes after twelve years where Molière began; and, if I may add a little joke of my own, Molière came to Paris with an *Etourdi*; Copeau left it——?

Giacomo Prampoli has an article on *Scrittori Catalani*; and, from an article called *Dopo il 'Festival' di Venezia*, by Alfredo Casella, I extract this:

'*A Concerto for pianoforte and chamber orchestra*, by Hindemith was given. This was another and a superb affirmation of the magnificent genius of this thirty-year-old musician, the only young German who has been able to free himself definitely from the grievous romantico-sentimental burden that has darkened until to-day post-Wagnerian German thought. Hindemith is a musician who only makes music, and who leaves in peace philosophy, literature, and painting. This *concerto* of his is a healthy and stupendous piece of true and sane music, powerful in its dynamism and ample in respiration. It is highly comforting to find that even Germany has at last a musician who places before all other preoccupations those of a purely musical order, and tries before all to solve musical problems with music instead of with the help of values that have nothing to do with the art of music.'

F. S. F.

### DANISH PERIODICALS

*Tilskueren*, July.—This number is of considerable literary interest. It has the first of two instalments of a diary kept by Hans Andersen in his last year at school at Slagelse, to which, in 1822, he was sent, a big boy of seventeen among little boys, by the aid of some friends, to remove the defects of his early education. He kept a diary during the last few months of 1825, which is now published for the first time in the Collin Manuscript Collection, and reprinted here. It covers some months at school, and his Christmas holidays in Copenhagen, where, though still a schoolboy, he already had

something of a literary reputation. He speaks of reading his poems to various people. He disliked the school and worried over his lessons. The headmaster was a man of ironical temper, who thought it his duty to repress the flights of young Andersen's imagination. The diary, the original faulty spelling of which is retained, is a curious mixture of puerility and consciousness of poetical powers. We find childish prayers that he may get into the Fourth Class, side by side with solemn statements that he feels himself a 'priest of God', longings to die and thoughts of suicide. It is a picture of a sensitive boy, emmeshed in unhappy circumstances, conscious of his backwardness and ignorance, but also semi-conscious of his great powers and future, religious and superstitious, with the morbidness which one feels sometimes even in his children's stories. The writer of the article claims that the diary is an important contribution to Andersen's psychology. It is interesting to find him reading and appreciating Smollett.

In *Den Unge Lyrik og dens Krise*, Tom Kristensen, himself one of them, attempts to account for the silence of the younger school of Danish poets. This is a very lively and interesting article. The younger school included Hans Hartvig Seedorf, Emil Bønnelycke, Fredrik Nygaard, and Otto Gelsted. The movement began in 1916, with the publication of a thin volume of verse by Seedorf, *Vinløv og Vedbend* (Vine leaves and Ivy) and it is apparently over. Both Seedorf and Bønnelycke began as poets of joy, careless joy, as if the world-war did not exist. Their poetry 'sent all the problems of the time to the devil', and the public, weary of the war and suffering, received them with open arms. Such an appetite for poetry had never been seen before in Denmark. 'Poets were almost as popular as actors.' The chief inspirations of all these younger poets were the Danish writers, Johs V. Jensen and Sophus Claussen, who had a world outlook, and Walt Whitman whose 'all is beautiful', became almost their battle-cry.

Kristensen says the poetry was audacious, aggressive and 'go-to-the-devil-ish', but had no firm framework to support it when the reaction came. The cult of youth and poetry made the poets careless, they grew more and more extreme, published half-baked experiments, and were often mere 'buffoons for the bourgeoisie'. In their beginnings, they were fine and worthy of the best Danish traditions.

The really new contribution of these poets to Danish literature was their discovery of the poetry of the city, in their case, Copenhagen, its sights and sounds. Bønnelycke produced a volume, *Gadedigte* (Poems of the Streets); Nygaard wrote *Storbys billeden* (City Pictures). They wrote about railways, dynamos, bridges, streets, the producing of a newspaper, and the song of women working at a rotary press.

Kristensen traces several reasons for the present silence of these poets. One is their connection with the press, which is concerned with things of

the moment, not eternal things like poetry. Another is that such careless joy is bound to end in self-criticism or religion. Religion has got hold of Seedorf and Bønnelycke. Politics also played a part. A mission to revolutionary Russia made Seedorf a reactionary. The poets also became too cosmopolitan. Ewald and Aarestrup are trying to make the Danish language as 'continental' as that of advertisements or scientific manuals, Bønnelycke is full of foreign words, Seedorf is imitating Kipling and has whole sentences in English.

Kristensen concludes that the formula of Whitman, 'all is beautiful', like the artistic view of life, could not be maintained. It means that both confusion and order are beauty, in short that not-beauty is beauty. Dadaism, with its homage to chaos, would have been the next step.

This number also contains an article on Sophus Claussen's *Heroica*, with a criticism and appreciation of Claussen's work, 'one of the classics of our time.'

*August.*—This number has the second instalment of Hans Andersen's Diary; also an article 'The Beauty of Nature', by A. C. Andersen, full of close observation of the sights and sounds of the country, and delight in the sun, such as only a northerner can feel. But most of all it emphasises the cruelty of Nature: 'All life is built up on murder. Our conception of God must include this.' For poetry, there is a bare impressive little poem in memory of Georg Hansen by Johannes Jorgensen, and a group of seven lyrics by Ingeborg Petersen, 'Werner and Wille,' two ill-fated lovers—charming, but rather obscure. There is also a good short story or sketch, 'Two Pictures', by Chr. Heden, and the first of two excellent articles on the modern French novel by Chr. Remestad, dealing with the elder moderns, Bourget, Abel Hermant, Henri de Régnier, and others.

*September.*—There is little of literary interest in this issue. Chr. Remestad continues his articles on the French novel with the younger writers, Roger Martin du Gard, Edmond Jaloux, Louis Hémon, Raymond Radiguet, Léon Martin, and others. He finds the influence of Proust all pervasive, but does not deal with Proust himself. Dr. Phil. Erik Abrahamsen begins a series of articles on musical science, the 'Benjamin of the Sciences'. There is also a long article on Gauguin, by Carl V. Petersen.

*October.*—(Not received.)

*November.*—The chief article is a review of new books by the editor; first of all some translations. Sevin says: 'If you wish to appreciate what a noble art it is to write well, compare a real poet's translation of a poetical work with the original.' This is *à propos* of a translation by Valdemar Rørdam of the *Autumn* of the Polish Nobel prizeman, Reymont, and a new



edition of Sophus Claussen's translation of the *Sensitive Plant*. It is claimed that the latter is occasionally finer than the original, e.g., in the lines :

'And the Spring arose on the garden fair,  
Like the Spirit of Love felt everywhere.'

which appears as :

'Og Foraaret kom, en forunderlig Vaar,  
Som en Elsker der tyst gennem Haverne gaar.'

That may be; the original is in no way remarkable. Levin also notes an adequate-seeming translation of Synge's *In the Shadow of the Glen* and *Riders to the Sea*, by Gunnar Robert-Hansen. Among noteworthy new Danish novels, he mentions: *Aphrodite fra Fuur*, by Fru Thit Jensen, a study of the modern woman which ends with the cradle or a hope of it; *Martha og Maria*, by Anker Larsen, whose *Philosopher's Stone* was a great recent success; *Skibe paa Himlen*, a fine study of childhood by Gunnar Gunnarsen; and *Fugle omkring Fyret* (Birds around the Fire), by Jacob Paludan, good but very unequal. Aage Matthison-Hansen contributes seven little poems, some of which are translations. One, 'From the Coast of Macedonia', after a modern Bulgarian poet, Ivan Vazov, is beautiful, and another, rather charming, which begins 'De Smaa Høje i Gloucestershire' (The little hills of Gloucestershire), is said to be 'after' one R. Fortescue Doria. Abrahamsen continues his articles on musical science, and there is also an article by J. O. Bøving-Petersen on J. P. Jacobsen, Denmark's greatest nature-writer and poet.

F. S. F.

## GERMAN PERIODICALS

*Der neue Merkur* (Berlin, Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt).—This interesting monthly ceased publication with the September number, leaving a gap in German periodical literature which no other review, unless it be the *Neue Rundschau*, entirely fills. What distinguished the *Neue Merkur* was the general high standard of its non-literary features—its art-criticism, its political and philosophical articles. Of these latter there were some good examples in the last four numbers. In the June number, 'Philosophische Fragmente', by Leo Schestow, a Russian philosophical writer, who here examines the fundamental cleavage between Catholicism and Protestantism, and provides a critical commentary on the Inquisitor passage in *The Brothers Karamazov*. In another fragment he has a striking criticism of the Hegelian philosophy of history, arguing against the treatment of history as a science and the fitting of mankind into categories. This is a writer well worth taking note of.

In the July number the novelist, Heinrich Mann, has the first of a series of letters destined for foreign readers, on present conditions in Germany. It is optimistic in its outlook, prophesying a century's social peace and endeavour to obtain industrial supremacy in harmony with the rest of Europe. Mann appears to have dropped much of his war-time revolutionary fervour. In the same number there is a short article by Friedrich Burschell summarising the life and significance of Jean Paul *à propos* of the centenary of his death on November 14th. This occasion has been seized by other writers to urge that the long-neglected Jean Paul has claims to almost as high regard as Goethe, but the old-fashionedness of his ideas and his often intolerable style will probably continue to frighten off even German readers from a real excursion on the vast sea of his works.

In the August and September numbers are to be recommended 'Der neue russische Mensch', by Adolf Grabowsky, and 'Englische Eindrücke', by Paul Graf Thun-Hohenstein.

*Die neue Rundschau* (Berlin, S. Fischer).—This old-established monthly comes nearer than any other to the *Neue Merkur*, which may well have been founded in imitation. Like the *Merkur* the *Rundschau*—compare the *Nouvelle Revue française* and the *Mercure de France*—the *Rundschau* is the organ of a particular firm of publishers, a fact to be remembered but not unduly emphasised. If Messrs. Fischer's authors are put forward rather prominently in each number it is a fair retort that they are in the front rank, including Thomas Mann (to whom the June number is devoted), Gerhart Hauptmann, Hermann Hesse, and, among foreign writers, Bernard Shaw. The July number contains an excellent criticism by Wilhelm Hausenstein of Vermeer van Delft, 'this highest expression of discipline in art'. In the August number there are two philosophical articles which are worth attention, Dr. Ernst von Asher on present-day philosophy, and a eulogistic essay on Nietzsche by Anton Kuh, the kind one heard fifteen years ago and is glad to hear again after a great deal of ill-informed and superficial depreciation during and since the war.

The principal items in the September and October numbers respectively are on Russia; the first, the diary of the Bolshevik poet, Alexander Blok, the second, the sketches made by Tolstoy for a great historical novel based on the life of Peter the Great.

*Die Literatur* (Berlin, Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt).—The June number contains a rather verbose, but in its conclusions readable, critical account of the expressionist school of German drama, by Hans Franck. After a review of the chief 'Expressionist' dramatists, Kaiser, Werfel, Hasenclever, Sorge, Toller, and Kornfeld, to all of whom, except the last, is denied the right to use the epithet, Herr Franck comes to the conclusion that the expressionist movement was merely the artistic manifestation of a humanity which had lost its standards. The 'Expressionist' reply would be inter-

esting, but we are unlikely to see it in this orthodox review.

Thirty-six recent books on Goethe are summarised by Georg Witkowski in the August number. This is labour-saving indeed.

In the same number Hans Franck, having dismissed the Expressionists, describes what he considers the one really notable new dramatic movement, 'Synthetismus'. This apparently means a complete blend of reality and unreality, and is said to be best exemplified in the work of Ernst Barlach. This artist is certainly worth attention among the best nine or ten German dramatists of to-day, but whether he deserves the extravagant eulogy with which Herr Franck closes his article is much to be doubted. But German critics, more even than American, or, on occasions and in certain places, our own, seem constitutionally incapable of avoiding superlatives.

In the September number is to be noted a review of Heinrich Mann's latest novel, *Der Kopf*, a *roman à clef* of the twenty years before the outbreak of the war, also Ernst Robert Curtius's essay on Charles du Bos, which reminds us that this excellent critic of modern French literature has recently published a volume of essays, some of which are well known to readers of this review. In the same number is a review of one of the best volumes of recent German criticism, Stefan Zweig's *Kampf mit dem Dämon*, a study in the problem and process of artistic creation as seen in Hölderlin, Kleist, and Nietzsche. The reviewer emphasises Zweig's insistence on the depressing influence of Kant on German literature, and the value of Hölderlin's timely escape from the enslavement of the Kantian 'categorical'.

A. W. G. R.

# THE NEW CRITERION

A QUARTERLY REVIEW

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VOL. IV, No. II

APRIL, 1926

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## A COMMENTARY

THE FUTURE OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE      An overworked and harried prime minister, addressing a non-political body on a non-political subject, is in a peculiarly difficult position. No recent tenant of that place, except perhaps the Earl of Oxford, could have composed a more admirable specimen of such oratory than Mr. Baldwin's recent address to the Classical Association. Any prime minister, of any party, might have been glad to make the same speech in the same circumstances. And as every public word of any statesman is suspect of political significance, and as we are convinced that Mr. Baldwin had nothing of the sort consciously or unconsciously in mind, and as the subject of his address is akin to the subject of a paragraph in an early number of *THE CRITERION*,<sup>1</sup> it seems suitable for mention in these pages.

It should be obvious that Mr. Baldwin's speech (reported in *The Times* of January 9th) bore no allusion, and cannot be cited either in support or condemnation of the present government of Italy. With the benefits or disadvantages of the present administration of Italy, except in so far as they can be shown to advance or obstruct Italian literature and culture, we have nothing to do, nor, we suppose, had Mr. Baldwin in his capacity as President of the Classical Association. We presume that his address would have been the same, whatever government had been flourishing or

<sup>1</sup> Vol. II, No. V. Note by Richard Aldington.

dwindling in Italy at the moment. The point upon which we ought to insist is this, that the Roman Empire does concern us, but that whatever use may be made of that idea in Italian politics as an incentive to Italian action is a local matter which does not concern—in either way—those persons who are interested primarily in European ideas. The old Roman Empire is an European idea; the new Roman Empire is an Italian idea, and the two must be kept distinct.

It may be objected with reason that Mr. Baldwin vacillates between the idea at a certain moment—at what moment is not clear, and in his speech there is even some ambiguity as to whether he is not at moments thinking of the idea of the Roman Republic—and the general idea of the Roman Empire. The general idea is found in the continuity of the impulse of Rome to the present day. It suggests Authority and Tradition, certainly, but Authority and Tradition (especially the latter) do not necessarily suggest Signor Mussolini. It is an idea which comprehends Hooker and Laud as much as (or to some of us more than) it implies St. Ignatius or Cardinal Newman. It is in fact the European idea—the idea of a common culture of western Europe. And when Mr. Baldwin asks whether there are ‘enough of the breed’ left in Britain, we should transpose the question, and ask, are there enough persons in Britain believing in that European culture, the Roman inheritance, believing in the place of Britain in that culture, and believing in themselves?

In this number of *THE NEW CRITERION* we publish an essay by the editor of *La Revue Universelle*, M. Henri Massis, in which the author states the problem as it appears to a Frenchman, and in which he states his own conclusion. In England, in Germany, in Italy or Spain, the problem may appear under a different light. We hope to obtain contributions to the same discussion from men of equal eminence and of different nationalities.

**FREEDOM OF SPEECH** In a recent, and most interesting address to the *Lessing-Akademie* in Berlin, Herr Max Scheler summarises the present situation in words which may be paraphrased somewhat as follows:

‘Russia: an *index librorum prohibitorum*, on which stand both Testaments, the Koran, the Talmud and all philosophers from

Thales to Fichte. No book, in which the word "God" appears, is allowed over the frontiers. Only are allowed books of direct utility of a technical, hygienic and economic class. . . . Tolstoi's writings of his elder period publicly burnt.—The United States of America: A movement called "fundamentalism", according to which the Bible as verbally inspired is established as the foundation of knowledge and life; a popular movement which aims at nothing less than the legal prohibition to teach in any publicly supported educational institution the theory of Evolution in any of its forms. . . . In Italy: a popular movement that in a childish, so-called "activism" and "vitalism" cultivates a verbose and vapid philosophy of history . . . which accepts the Church of Rome not as an universal institution of truth and healing, but as a mere element in Italian history. . . . In Spain: one of the noblest and most honest of men, Unamuno, banished, the universities in bitter struggle for life against clericalism. . . . In Germany: . . . a revolution which, contrary to the practice of revolutions, has greatly strengthened the power of the Roman Church'.

Herr Scheler continues in the same strain concerning the dangers, coming from both Socialism and the Church, to freedom of opinion in the German universities. It is notable that in this list neither France nor England is included. We do not vouch for his accuracy, we pass no opinion; but it is matter for sober reflection, rather than for premature jubilation, that he appears by implication to consider that in England and in France the culture of ideas has still as much liberty as, let us say, in the Sorbonne in the XIIIth century. In this connexion we refer the reader to Mr. W. B. Yeats's commentary in this number of *THE NEW CRITERION* upon a recent incident in Dublin: these notes have already been published in America, but it was thought that so distinguished an author as Mr. Yeats should be given the opportunity of exposing his views in this country also.

# DEFENCE OF THE WEST

By HENRI MASSIS

[*Translated by F. S. FLINT*]

## I

THE future of western civilisation, indeed the future of mankind, is to-day in jeopardy. This is no imaginary peril, none of those dark forebodings that weak minds love to dwell upon, to feed and nourish their fearful distaste for all effort. There is no worse moral collapse, no more degrading misfortune for a people than to yield to these nameless fears, to this terror of the future, which betray only the disorder of minds anxious and defeated in advance. Therefore, all those who are seeking to change us, to put a different bent on us, to turn us into other paths, never cease to prophesy our death throes, to appeal to our agonies, to call our culture in question, to throw doubt upon the worth of our possessions, in order finally to ruin our humanity in its principles. These prophets of disaster, the conspiracy of whose voices clashes over the mangled body of Europe—it is against their designs that we have first of all to defend ourselves. The sole certain outcome of such propaganda, which is aimed far more at the overthrow of the order of the world than at its determination, can only be to make uneasiness universal and renunciation possible, to sap resistance and to darken counsel, to cause us to lose sight of the rules of preservation and to neglect the measures vital to our recovery. Of all the evils that afflict us, there is none more to be feared than these.

But in refusing to give way to this fatal disorder, in which the individual recoils before the effort necessary to

defend himself, we do not any the less appreciate the mortal danger overhanging Europe. There is no man of sense, no thinking man heedful of the future, who does not feel both the tragic greatness of the danger, and the stern need to serve in order to survive. These are no vague conjectures: the facts are 'clear and pitiless', and things have left us no choice. The series of events, at the end of which Western civilisation runs the risk of being engulfed or of falling into servitude, can be understood by everybody: they 'are in the newspapers'.<sup>1</sup>

It is no longer a question now of those too exact forecasts which observers who are alive to the harmony between ideas and facts, have been able to make in the light of experience, the nature of things and analogies drawn from history. The crisis of Western civilisation and the danger of Asiaticism are no longer questions reserved solely for the meditations of men of intellect. They are so important that at the present time they traverse the path of the most sluggish and the most shortsighted policy. Even our governors, however devoid of imagination we suppose them to be, however inclined to ignore spiritual realities, to leave out of account the crises of feelings and ideas which develop in the bosoms of those in whom great historic changes prepare their apparition, even our governors seem suddenly to have become aware of the danger. As for the public conscience in France, the revolt of a Berber chieftain was required to give it a glimmering of the profound significance of an event that is less important for what it is than for what it presages. Until then, the formidable problems raised by the awakening of the nations of Asia and Africa, united by Bolshevism against Western civilisation, were scarcely understood at all. Let us hope that they will not become in their turn

<sup>1</sup> The reader will remember the famous and often-quoted pages of Paul Valéry in *La Crise de l'Esprit*. They are the starting point of all reflections on a subject like this.



the commonplaces of a political system of ideas lacking severity and rigour, whose powerlessness to save anything whatever is covered by these ample pretexts in order to account for its embarrassment and to justify its inactivity.

There is an abundance of documents from which to obtain an exact notion of signs and things. Wherever you turn, policy and ideas, appetites and mysticisms, the spiritual and the temporal, are closely intermingled. There is nothing that is not questioned and that does not appear ready to be translated into action. It seems as though there were in preparation a complete redistribution of humanity, a clashing of its contradictory ideals, of its dissimilar vital principles and its heterogeneous systems of knowledge—and this in the midst of the fever of the Asiatic peoples, aware of the discord in Europe, whose ‘ideas’ will have served merely to awaken their instincts and exasperate their jealousies and mistrusts.

At the very moment when technical progress seemed to be on the point of bringing about the unity of the human race, there occurred the most complete rupture of equilibrium that the world had ever known. For ‘the human race is less united than it was under Titus, when all the civilised peoples were grouped under the *fascies*. The human race is less united than it was in the time of Saint Louis, when all the Christian peoples were confederated under the Triple Crown’.<sup>1</sup> The ease of material communications, which was, according to democratic doctrines, to bring about a union of minds, has succeeded in making the world uniform, but not in uniting it.

Thought, which is subdued to the character of national temperament, displays its incompatible differences. Where, demands the philosopher, are the ‘happy civilisations of ancient Greece and of the France of former days, which were candid as the intelligence, and in which, in the most

<sup>1</sup> Charles Maurras, *Kiel et Tangier*, page 328.

national of soils, took root the most universal and most human thought'?<sup>1</sup> The nations, like so many schisms, are set up against one another as antagonistic concepts, that claim to enthrall the very essence of the mind. This is because 'matter is essentially a divider and men can communicate only on the immaterial plane'. But the mind itself is cruelly 'wounded'; it has become materialised in its turn, and seems to have lost all consciousness of its own purpose. Mechanical progress has so thoroughly corrupted it that nothing in the deadly dreams of the Utopians can be compared to its positive results. We are threatened with destruction by the very means by which we thought to live. We see what is at the end of this stupid greed for material power that has diverted the West from its true mission. Europe, 'the brain of a vast body' whose movements it no longer controls, is in a state against nature, and it cannot remain there. The war merely precipitated the course of events. But on the very threshold of this inhuman age, Charles Maurras prophesied the consequences of these degrading follies: 'The whole of the nineteenth century', he wrote in 1905, 'has been but one long scientific, industrial, and commercial effort to extend the scope of human power, to arrange the whole earth and to multiply civilisation by the sacrifice of barbarian labour. . . . But the barbarian is by no means a vassal; he is arming, he is making progress, and he is threatening. *Civilisation does not form a compact and united body*; it has its followers, its black and yellow mercenaries. Imprudences and errors will have to be paid for, as they have been paid for in the course of history, at the price of blood'.

Twenty years have passed. European unity, which had been spiritually undone since the Reformation, was physically broken in 1914. It required nearly four

<sup>1</sup> Jacques Maritain, *Réflexions sur l'intelligence*, page 265.

centuries before the great Western schism, morally accomplished at the very beginning of history, and completed politically by the revolution, fully developed all its deadly powers. We are confronted to-day with the tragic epilogue to this inhuman and hideous division. It is civilisation, the idea even of civilisation, of which Europe claimed to be the holder, that is most deeply wounded. In the eyes of that part of the world which lived in the illusion of our homogeneity, civilisation seems vanquished. The war has made it unrecognisable.

Cited as its witness by all the nations whom the struggle had brought to the clash of arms, called and enrolled in the service of their propaganda, 'civilisation' covered everything, justified everything. Did not each of the groups, mad in their own destruction, claim to be the only one engaged in the defence of civilisation? And the terrible work went on under the invocation by all of the same obscure deity. The just reasons for the war—the struggle for our native soil and for political independence—no longer seemed sufficient causes. It became necessary to bring into the conflict spiritual and moral values, philosophies and dogmas, traditions and beliefs; to mobilise under the adverse banners, Law and Justice, the whole crowd of divine personages. Now these idols are themselves laid waste, even more than the battlefields. In the midst of the tumult of discordant voices, the least that could be said was that the same words did not stand for the same things, and that those who used them betrayed not only their state of conflict, but also that they were divided in their very being, in their thoughts, in their soul, on the essential thing in life, and that civilisation might very well mean matter and number, everything which creates antagonism of appetites and cupidities, and gives rise to massacres and destruction, but that it did not form that *common good* on the strength of which it claims to impose itself on the rest of the world. The result has

been a terrible crisis, a mental disorder, of which it is not yet possible to measure the effects.

Even more than the spectacle of the broils of war, the discords of Europe, where all shades of opinion are tearing each other to pieces, have singularly weakened our prestige as 'civilised peoples' in the eyes of the Asiatics. Asia, which has so long suffered under the domination of the Western yoke, is not only overjoyed to see Europeans vilified and beaten down by themselves; it has remembered the grievances and accusations that were spread by an imprudent propaganda to the farthest limits of the barbarian world. And here is this world, both judge and party in the huge law-suit we have instituted over the whole face of the globe; it gives evidence in its turn, and throws into the debate all the title-deeds of the past, all that we have taught it to remember. We may have laid aside our arms; the battle of ideas continues. Our ideas no longer belong to us. The words we used in order to enrol our mercenaries, to rally them to the defence of 'civilisation and right', are taken up and turned against us by the mercenaries. It was inevitable that it should come to this.

All travellers, all foreigners who have lived for long in the Far East, assure us that in five years ideas have changed more profoundly than in ten centuries. The old easy submission has been succeeded by a dull hostility, a veritable hatred that awaits only the favourable moment to be translated into action. From Calcutta to Shanghai, from the Mongolian steppes to the plains of Anatolia, the whole of Asia is permeated by an inexorable desire for freedom. The supremacy to which Europe has been accustomed, since the day when John Sobieski finally checked the onrush of the Turks and the Tartars beneath the walls of Vienna, is no longer recognised by the Asiatic peoples. All these peoples are aspiring after the recovery of their unity against the 'white man', whose overthrow

they proclaim. The underlying reasons for this enormous recoil have been correctly stated by Abel Bonnard at the end of the story of his travels, *En Chine*: 'Simultaneously with the practice of a policy of domination', he says, 'the white man spread about ideas of equality; one day his ideas had to come into conflict with his actions. There is no doubt that new theories and principles for a long time have no result, remain as it were suspended in the air; and it really is a little too convenient at certain epochs, to give oneself the prestige of the most liberal ideas, while at the same time profiting by the solidity of a world with the making of which liberalism had nothing to do. But these times are over. We are living in a period of penalties and consequences, in one of those dramatic eras when words take on flesh and press to be recognised as things. . . . Custom has deadened these words for us, but they recover their full effect when they are exercised on newer races. . . . By a combination of events which makes the drama still more arresting, it is at the very moment when the white man was on the point, if not of giving up the ideas in which he believed, at least of subjecting them to a severer scrutiny, that he sees these ideas escaping from him and a claim to benefit by them being put forward by other men. . . . Just when the principles of the modern world were about to be judged by the result of a first trial, another experiment was set on foot, vaster and more summary still, positively terrifying in its universal character'.

Does Europe wish to save itself, or will it continue to slide down the slope of a general surrender which is fostered by the negative doctrines of its being? Does it believe itself to be immune from the intellectual, political and mystical ideals of the East, which is taking advantage of the state of reduced resistance in which it has surprised Europe, to deaden its will and to destroy the last germs of

unity that survive in it? It is the soul of the West that the East wishes to attack, that soul, divided, uncertain of its principles, confusedly eager for spiritual liberation, and all the more ready to destroy itself, to allow itself to be broken up by Oriental anarchy, because it has of itself departed from its historical civilising order and its tradition. On the pretext of bringing us what we need, a certain kind of Asiaticism is disposing us to the final dispersal of the heritage of our culture and of all that which enables the man of the West still to keep himself upright on his feet. Personality, unity, stability, authority, continuity—these are the root-ideas of the West. We are asked to break these to pieces for the sake of a doubtful Asiaticism in which all the forces of the human personality dissolve and return to nothingness. We are asked to destroy the lineaments of man, which he has spent long years and methodical and persevering efforts in acquiring.

This new assault by the East on the Latin inheritance, that is to say, on all that remains to us of possibilities of order, protective substance, intimate cohesions, found, as was to be expected, its natural allies in those newly formed nations who have not kept step with the others in the march of human civilisation, and who belong only in an artificial and incomplete manner to the body of the West.

First of all in Germany, which is perpetually hesitating between Asiatic mysticism and the Latin spirit, and which is in a state of permanent protest against the Roman idea. We have seen Germany in defeat regaining touch with her native East, which presents remarkable affinities with her own thought. No other nation was, therefore, more eager than Germany to prophesy the 'downfall of the West', the West, the mastery of which had slipped from her hands. 'Night falls over Europe', wrote Walther Rathenau a few months before his tragic death, 'more and

more, everything forces us to look to the East. For us Germans, it is a question of life or death. . . . But it is not without a dreadful melancholy that men like us, with our past, our prejudices and our traditions, turn away from the West—a sentimental attraction that we have no longer the right to feel, or even to confess. This is the great consequence of the war; this is its tragedy, which our children will not understand. They will have become accustomed to the idea of being mere *graculi*, and for them our present distress will have no meaning'.

And during those four years (1918 to 1922), when the moral disarray of Germany was limitless, the efforts of all her thinkers and writers were devoted to filling the world with their own disenchantment, to cultivating the germs of a destructive Asiaticism in order to scatter them over the nations of devastated Europe.

The Germany of 1918, frustrated in her ambition for spiritual hegemony, proclaimed, by the voice of Edward Spengler, the downfall of Europe, and greeted the advent of a new religious faith in the East. At Darmstadt, Count Hermann Keyserling opened a School of Wisdom, the disciples of which looked to the *yoghis* to satisfy the needs of their uneasy spiritual state. At Munich, frenzied crowds were seen following the Bengalee poet, Rabindranath Tagore, and his fakir-like stammerings were well adapted to soothe their wounded pride. Defeated Germany, faithful to the pessimism of Schopenhauer, found once more in Chinese and Indian texts that contradictory philosophy, with its infinite perspectives, that idealistic pantheism, which slumbers in the depths of her being.

Thus there was a veritable craze for books on the language, the philosophy, the art and the peoples of Asia. The complete works of Buddha were translated by Karl Neumann; Leopold Ziegler's *Eternal Buddha* again found thousands of readers; Deussen's enormous *History of Hindoo Philosophy* was reprinted. In spite of the crisis

in the book-trade at that time, the Jena publisher, Diederich, did not hesitate to publish in 1922, when the mark was falling disastrously, a translation in ten volumes of the principal treatises of Confucius, Lao-Tsu and Mencius.

It must be understood at once that the interest which the Germans found in this kind of study, has nothing in common with the interest which a Goethe or a Herder had shown in the past for the first translation of *Sakuntala*, nor with the admiration by which Humboldt was carried away on reading the Latin translation Schlegel had made of the *Bahavat-Gita*. It was not a literary interest only; moreover, it was not inspired by interest in an exotic culture. What then was it at bottom? Nostalgia for another ideal, bewilderment caused by the crumbling of their own culture, a feeling that the Germano-Latin ethic had outlived its day, a messianic expectation of an evangel which would lead the new humanity a further stage? All these were developed successively in the countless theories the Germany of the time feverishly worked out to mask her own collapse. For the German people, in 1919, were shattered to the depths.

It is from the pen of a famous German writer, the novelist, Thomas Mann, that we get this pathetic confession: 'Our people were as weak as a new-born infant'. And he adds: 'The disaster suffered by France after the defeat of 1870-1871 was mere child's play compared with the sufferings of Germany in the years following 1918. The German people suffered a collapse, physical and mental, which they are a long way from having surmounted, such a collapse as history, doubtless, had never known before our time. For it is without precedent that a great civilised nation, conscious of having rendered eminent and original services to humanity, should find itself one fine day in the character and position of an outcast, an enemy of the human race, stigmatised, outlawed, abandoned



by all, and to be fought to the death by a league of all civilised nations. . . . What followed was an unparalleled, a complete and unconditional capitulation, the surrender of a moral fortress that had long defended itself with clenched teeth, but that finally was left without the slightest power of resistance. . . . The demoralisation had no limits; it could be seen in the deep and almost fatal anxiety of a whole nation that despaired of itself, of its history, of its finest treasures; all of which, from its first origins, seemed refuted and reduced to absurdity by such a result; for it had all been morally implicated in a war which, for that very reason, it was declared, must absolutely be won, and which, in fact, with such a weight of ideas behind it, ought not to have been lost'.

This weight of ideas, which was Germano-Latin culture, post-war Germany made responsible for her defeat; she proclaimed its death agonies and turned towards the Orient with a dark vehemence. And Professor Ernst Robert Curtius wrote in 1923: 'Young Germany looks to the East and turns her back on the West. That is a decisive moment. It has always been a necessity of the German mind to derive strength from outside itself, to fertilise itself with foreign elements suited to its own nature. But where this tendency is really alive, where it is untrammelled by a pedantic and prematurely senile nationalism, it turns towards Russia, and further still towards India and China. The sympathies which part of our youth show for Bolshevism are only one of the outward signs of this tendency. The political attitude adopted towards Bolshevism matters very little. What is particularly remarkable in its appearance, is that it is the expression of a change in the tendencies of the Western mind. Ever since Descartes and Voltaire and the philosophers of France and England, it seemed that normally any spiritual emancipation and any social reform must come from the West. Those times for us are over . . .'

And the Magdeburg professor quotes as symptomatic, an article in the *Neue Rundschau* in which Dr. Paquet wrote, in 1921: 'The pillars of Germano-Latin civilisation are tottering, while on the other hand, the Slavo-Germanic work of reconstruction is advancing. . . . Under the spiritual influence of the awakening Orient, which is reviving among Europeans the sentiments of primitive India and its age-old wisdom, a new morality is arising in the West'.

Beneath this return to Asia preached by the philosophers, the German writers, who like a Hermann Hesse or a Bonsels, have suddenly fallen beneath the Oriental spell to the extent of changing souls as artist-sages of the Celestial Empire, may be discovered a sort of grudge, of bitter resentment, a secret aversion from the culture, the spirit, that has conquered; and they devoted themselves to discrediting it even at the risk of seeing civilisation itself disappear in the crash foretold by their gloomy philosophy. This obscure will to destruction which pierces through Spengler's book, *Der Untergang des Abendlandes*, flattered the German in his taste for the confused, the unfinished, the thing which is not, the novelty which has no name, the chaos from which anything may emerge, where the imagination may dream without end, where nothing possesses either form or limit. But under cover of a romanticism that proclaims the ruin of material culture, repudiates the worship of organisation, and exalts the inward contemplation of the Orient, it is her intellectual revenge on the classic West that conquered her, that Germany is seeking to prepare. The whole philosophy of a Spengler, for example, is a historico-metaphysical edifice, hastily constructed to liberate modern thought from Hellenism. And his too famous book would never have had such a success, if, more or less consciously, Germany did not hope for great things from this liberation. Even those who, like Thomas Mann,

are to-day denouncing these Asiatic tendencies as a danger to the German national spirit, are also asking whether the humanist tradition of classicism is important to humanity as a whole, whether it is humanly eternal, or whether it is not merely the spiritual form of an age that is passing; and the conclusion is that both the ancient and the Christian ideas are outworn.

But the feeling of defeat is not enough to explain the sudden aversion shown by Germany for Western humanity, for the Latin races in which it is embodied, for all that Germany once took so much trouble to understand, to imitate, and to organise with so determined and intent a method. Is it conceivable that, after our defeat in 1870, thinkers like Taine and Renan, in their concern for the conditions favourable to our recovery, could ever have advised us to look to the maxims of Confucius or Lao-Tsu for the gospel of the new life? If the German could think that he might 'dewesternise' himself by the same deliberate intent, if he has been seen to escape and cut himself off so easily from a world that seemed no longer made for him, it is because civilisation, the intellectual, social and moral progress that it represents, 'did not operate in the Germanic race as a result of an inner development', it is because it was not the product of an 'indigenous progress', a progress inwardly accomplished.

Therefore, Greco-Latin culture is not Germany's own proper possession, the foundation of her humanity; it is an acquisition of her learned men, her philologists. Philology crossed the Rhine; it set foot on a soil that remained inaccessible to the Roman legions, in those immense tracts which Tacitus in the first century still described as we in the nineteenth described Central Africa or Australia. But no tradition, no monument, no hereditary instinct emerged as a commentary on these classic works, which remain foreign to the Germanic mind at bottom. Greek and Latin remained the appanages of her savants,

who are set apart from the mass of the people, mere books of *texts* to which German erudition applied its remarkable gift for research and systematic construction; but the secret life that dwells beneath the works of the classic mind escapes it; it treats them as a working-stock of antiquities. The Greco-Latin culture is not a fundamental asset of civilisation for the German, since he has not shared its past to the point of becoming identified with it. In the wake of a Goethe or a Hölderlin, he may put forward a claim to have made the conquest of this civilisation; but it remained for him a thing borrowed which does not partake of the essence of his nature, and from which he can turn away. His philologists have opened it up to him; they will easily provide him with another. Have they not studied, classified and card-indexed all human civilisations? They are ready, with the help of philosopher-historians, to put together another historical *dossier*, establish another filiation, another scheme of life. And this all the more easily as no type of civilisation has ever succeeded in subduing the original individualism of the Germanic race. Hence the ease with which they adapt themselves to new forms of life, and receive contradictory impulsions; hence their perpetual sedition against the order of the world, those historic upheavals which are a continual threat to older and more complete nations, where culture is preserved and transmitted as a long-tried practice which they could not break from without harm to themselves.

. . . . .

The same phenomenon—in a more acute form in so far as its connection with the West was still more fortuitous and savage—may be observed in that Russia which, after two centuries of forced Europeanisation, is returning to its Asiatic destinies, and rousing itself and all the Asiatic races against the civilisation it endured only under com-

pulsion and in a spirit of bitter resistance. The Marxian or Western elements which the Russian revolution offers to the gaze of those who remain on the surface of things, should not prevent us from perceiving what is fundamental in the Bolshevich upheaval: the end of the epoch of Peter the Great, which was captivated by Western liberalism, the end of the European epoch in Russia, which, with this evolution, is again turning its face towards the East. The Czar Nicholas did not fall a victim to a European doctrine of progress. It was Peter the Great who was slain in the person of Nicholas; and his fall opened up before the people of Russia, not, as may have been thought, the path to Europe, but the way back to Asia.

And what do those intellectual émigrés tell us who live to-day in Europe? 'If we are thrust to the edge of the precipice', writes Prince Troubetzkoï, 'it is because the way we followed was bad. . . . Therefore we now disown everything: your Western wisdom, your art, your machinery—and your communism. We want no more of Peter the Great who led us to make your acquaintance. Do not look on us as sons of Europe lacking in talents. . . . Europe is not our mother. Our way clearly marked out for us, leads to the East. Russia sinned in disavowing her Orientalism and in allowing herself to be led astray by Western illusions'. Communism apart—though Russian communism is something essentially Asiatic—Soviet Russia thinks in the same way as this aristocrat. There is something specific, something fundamental here.

The obscure masses of Old Russia had never ceased from opposing the reforms of a Peter the Great, whom they received in terror, and in whom they saw from the first merely the approach of the end of the world, the coming of Antichrist. It was necessary to 'cut off heads' before the Moscow *raskolniks* (sectaries) accepted the ideas imported from Europe by the Czars. But these Asiatics never felt themselves linked with the historic

destinies of the other races of the West; and the struggle between 'slavophiles' and 'Occidentalists', the bloody episodes of which fill the annals of modern Russia, is to some extent a foreshadowing of the great drama in which the East and the West come to grips. The Russian problem is essentially such a problem. Therein may be found all the stock subjects, all the grievances used by Bolshevik propaganda to stir up the ancient soul of Asia; and these are those which the conjugate fatalities of nature and history have imposed on this great nomadic people, that rests on the one side on China and on the other on Germany, and does not yet know for which world she was born. 'We have never marched with the other nations', said Tchaadaieff, 'we belong to none of the families of the human race. We are neither of the East nor of the West, and we have the traditions of neither'.

The Czar, Nicholas the First, shut up as a madman this lucid Russian who expressed so pathetically the unhappy fate of his race, 'placed as it were outside time and unreachd by the universal education of the human race'. Nothing, however, is more illuminating of the Russian soul than the testimony of Tchaadaieff: 'We came into the world', he says, 'like illegitimate children, with no heritage, no bond with the men who preceded us on the earth; we have in us no trace of the teaching previous to our own existence. What in other people is a habit, an instinct, we have to drive into our heads with a hammer. We are, so to speak, strangers to ourselves. We march so peculiarly in time that as we advance, the evening before escapes us never to return. It is the natural result of an imported and imitative culture. We have no inner development, no natural progress; new ideas sweep away the old, because the new do not arise out of the old, but fall from one knows not where. As we adopt only ready-made ideas, the ineffaceable traces that a progressive movement of ideas leaves on the mind, and that gives it

its strength, do not grave themselves on our intelligence. We grow, but we do not ripen'.

Therefore, the Russian intelligence has nowhere found those traditional habits that come from education and good manners, and that give free-play to the mind and a regular movement to the soul. 'No definite sphere of existence', says Tchaadaieff, 'no rule for anything. . . . In our houses, we seem like people camping-out; in our families, we seem like strangers; in our towns, we seem like nomads, more nomadic than those who pasture on our Steppes, for they are more attached to their desert than we are to our cities'.

But is not this nomad habit, this lack of fixity, this need to move on, the characteristic of all the Russian people? Its peasants, unlike ours, have no aggressive desire to settle on the chosen spot and to influence their surroundings in their own interests. It would seem that nothing holds them, but that something ceaselessly drives them elsewhere towards the distant mirages of the endless plain. As Maxim Gorki profoundly remarked: 'The man of the West, as soon as he stands up on his hind legs, sees everywhere the monumental results of the work of his ancestors. From the canals of Holland to the vineyards of Vesuvius, from the great works of England to the mighty factories of Silesia, the whole surface of Europe is abundantly covered by the splendid embodiments of the organised will of man, that will which has set before itself a proud aim: to subdue the elemental forces of nature to the rational interests of man. The soil is in the hands of man, and he is really its master. The child of the West sucks in this impression at the breast, and it breeds in him a consciousness of the value of man, of respect for his work and a feeling of his personal importance as an inheritor of the marvels produced by the hand and brain of his ancestors. Such thoughts', Gorki concludes, 'such feelings and appreciations, would never arise in the soul of the

Russian peasant. The endless plain, on which are huddled wooden villages covered with thatch, has the pernicious power of emptying a man and draining him of desires. The peasant leaves the confines of his village, he looks at the emptiness around him, and, in a little while, he feels that this emptiness has been poured into his soul. Nowhere are any lasting traces of work or creation to be seen. . . . All around, a limitless plain, and at the centre of it, a tiny little man, thrown on to this wearisome earth to do the work of a convict. And the man is satiated with that feeling of indifference which kills the capacity to think, to remember what has gone before, and to draw ideas from experience'.

A people without historical experience, that is the Russian people. *They had no Middle Ages; they did not go through the adolescence of nations, the time of great undertakings, of great passions, whose memory is carried down to a riper age, that finds in it both a lesson and a source of pleasure. First, brutal barbarism; then gross superstition inherited from Byzantium, followed by the fierce, foreign, degrading tyranny of the great Mongol and Tartar Khans, the spirit of which was later inherited by the national power: this was the youth of the Russian people. They did not know that age of exuberant activity, of the exalted play of moral forces. The epoch in their social life that corresponds to this ardent time, was filled by a dull and dark existence, without vigour and without energy, animated by nothing but crime, sweetened by nothing but slavery. Russia passed its first years in a sort of inert brutalisation, and up to the threshold of modern times, she still lived in a complete, chaotic fermentation like the changing states of the earth that preceded its present condition.*

Therefore, the Russian people have made almost no contribution to general civilisation. We must not forget that Russia is scarcely five centuries removed from the



invasion of the barbarians, while it is fourteen hundred years since the rest of Europe underwent the same crisis; a civilisation that is older by a thousand years sets an immeasurable distance between the manners and customs of nations.<sup>1</sup> This fundamental difference is the chief thing that isolates the Russian people, places them in a region of emptiness, and separates them from the historical experience of the rest of humanity. They have never been united, except by the arbitrary will of a Czar, to the Western order, to the world of Law; and these are not things that are settled by decree. Suddenly, and with no preparation, they were sent first to the school of the Encyclopædists, and then to that of the German philosophers. They had never been taught the catechism, and they were to be initiated into the entire bag of Hegelian mysteries. Thus, when Russia was opened to outside influences, it was to drink long draughts of the errors of an already corrupted Europe, from which nothing in herself could save her. 'We began our civilisation directly by perversion', said Dostoievsky. In order to escape its ravages, Russia lacked that mass of general notions which, in the form of feelings and ideas, fills the very air we breathe, and by which our character is made even before we are born. Whence comes this lack of balance, of intellectual method and of logic that strikes us in Russian works of genius? 'The syllogism of the West is unknown to us', writes Tchaadaieff again. 'The best ideas, for lack of connection and consequence, sterile and bedazzling, become paralysed in our brains. There is nothing general in our minds; everything is particular, and everything is floating and incomplete'. There is no tradition either of criticism, of experience or of foresight; nothing but a sort of primitive and mystical naturism, which predisposed Russia to submit to the influence of the most rudimentary negations. She collects them all with a sort of dark eagerness: 'Why not set free

<sup>1</sup> A remark made as early as 1835 by the Marquis de Custine.

all human impulses? Why not reduce the whole planet to fragments?' There is no reply, no resistance, only the appeal of an instinct, drunk with the desire to destroy, whose fury is exasperated by the very worst of ideologies.

*(To be concluded)*

# ON CRITICISM

By RT. HON. J. M. ROBERTSON

## I

IT is a suggestive thing that in common talk the class-term 'critics' usually hints disparagement. When men speak of poets, artists, historians or philosophers, though these labels, too, are at times applied with disrespect, more often than not they are used to call up the memory of the most famous. 'Biographer' perhaps tends to convey a 'pejorative' suggestion; but those other names normally do not. It is when we come to 'critics' that we are conscious of a general odour of unsanctity.

The commonest remark on the subject, perhaps, is Disraeli's phrase in *Lothair*: 'You know what critics are? The men who have failed in literature and art'. The fact that it occurs in a book that is admittedly itself a literary failure, by an author who attained only popular and pecuniary success, has never checked its wide acceptance. It is but a variant, too, of a pronouncement by a weightier oracle. It was Coleridge, one of the few acclaimed voices of English criticism, who decided that '*Reviewers* are usually people who would have been poets, historians, biographers, if they could; they have tried their talents at one or the other, and have failed; therefore they turn critics'. In that wording, with the 'usually', the verdict has sufficient statistical truth to carry its point with most people. The outstanding fact is that critics are regarded as mostly if not generically bad; and that there are not enough good ones to affect the connotation. There are at least a hundred bad poets, artists, and philosophers, for one good or great. Still, we have mental lists of the latter order. Not so of critics: their very function suggests unsuccess and incompetence, though not a few successful

historians—as Macaulay, Carlyle, and Froude—have had also a wide popular acceptance as critics of a kind, and were critics before they were historians.

It is then probably quite safe to say that there is no current notion that criticism *can* be a high intellectual function. There is rather a quite general acquiescence in Wordsworth's dictum that criticism as such is a much inferior form of mental activity to 'invention', which he inexpensively ranked as 'creative', after having set out, in the Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*, with the avowal that the bulk of literary invention, alike in prose and in verse, is trash. It is interesting to recall that Wordsworth's pronouncement against criticism—which was made in conversation, not in print—is an echo from Gray, some of whose verse he had so laboriously criticised. 'You know', wrote Gray to Mason in 1757, 'I do not love, much less pique myself on criticism; and think even a bad verse as good a thing or better than the best observation that ever was made upon it'. The 'it' suggests a restriction of the censure to mere verbal or point-to-point criticism; but Gray probably went further; and it is hardly to be doubted that Wordsworth at least was framing a general ban on criticism after he had met with too much of the kind he had lavished in his first Preface.

The residual assumption is that there is nothing deserving to be called creative even in the best criticism. And Arnold, the critic, did not venture to maintain that there was, even when he was deprecating the severity of Wordsworth's ban. It did not occur to him to remark that Wordsworth in his Prefaces and Supplements was strenuously writing criticism; that the criticism was on the whole, despite miscarriages, much better in its kind than a great deal of its author's verse; and that probably most men, whatever their theoretic views on criticism, would rather read through several volumes of any of the

quarterlies than plod straight through the whole of Wordsworth's poetry, so often falsely so-called.

These retorts obtrude themselves. And still we have made small headway to a view of criticism as a high intellectual function. Wordsworth's own criticism is, on the face of the case, something divided against itself, not to be ranked as a mental achievement with his best poetry; and the fame of Coleridge, so much more largely memorable as a critic, herein assimilates to his. He functions mainly as a poet. Historically considered, then, criticism is relatively impermanent. The men who were read as critics in their day, the Jeffreys and Southey's, are now unread: the title of 'the prince of critics' is become a thing to wonder at: the time even of smiling is past. Not that many readers in the last seventy years have even sought to weigh Jeffrey for themselves, though he is still worth reading on some issues: that is part of the situation: few readers are seriously interested at all in the literature of criticism; and nobody pretends that we ought to be. Criticism is more impermanent even than the novel, of which the classics, even the bad classics, have a continuous audience.

Jane Austen—a 'good' classic—has had in the past thirty years many more readers than she ever had before, though she never lacked high praise. Nothing in the critical work of her age, not even the critical work of Coleridge, has had any such fortune, though the sheer play of thought in his criticism has always held the attention of those who themselves think about the problem. And not even they are wont to rank him as a 'classic' *qua* critic.

There are, indeed, single works of criticism which may fitly and acceptably be so emblazoned, being recognised not merely as sound judgments but as laudable processes of critical thinking, stamped with literary distinction. If the standard be not put austere high on

the scores of entire rightness and consistency, we may reasonably so speak of Sidney's *Apology for Poetry*, and Dryden's *Essay on Dramatic Poesy*, and Maurice Morgann's *Essay on the Dramatic Character of Falstaff*. Still more confidently may we attach the blue ribbon to Lamb's *Essay On the Tragedies of Shakespeare*, and to Coleridge's chapters on Wordsworth. The property of great or good criticism is not merely to guide or command judgment but to generate in the reader a process of assenting thought analogous to that which follows a new demonstration in geometry, in any natural science, or in philosophy. The result is a new structure of reason, certainly as justly to be reckoned 'creative' as even a durable achievement in æsthetics, and incomparably more important than an 'invention' which fails to convince critical judgment. And the criticisms just named, in greater or less degree, do set up such a mental process, even when we recognise that they are rather steps towards solution than conquests of the problems they approach.

Still, we can make up no such list of 'masterpieces' of criticism as may be made, or at least is often attempted, of poems, plays, and novels: the general impression remains that the great bulk of the vast mass of printed criticism of the past is as such negligible, even if much of it be passed as reasonable, just, and fitly worded. And thus the question arises, whether the rarity of memorable force in critical work may not be due to the fact that consummate criticism is really the most *difficult* thing to do in literature—more difficult even than the production of a good novel, poem, or play? Or, alternatively, that the rarity of high performance in criticism is due to the failure of most critics to realise *how* essentially difficult is their task, properly estimated?

We shall have to consider, later, whether a main hindrance lies in the economic conditions under which most printed criticism is produced; the prevailing circum-

stance being that it is written mainly for newspapers, and must therefore make a journalistic rather than a philosophic or a scientific appeal, the majority of readers being indisposed to mental effort. Even the majority of the lengthy 'reviews', on the other hand, are probably written with no thought of a permanent audience. But the fact that some criticism does make the high appeal and leave the lasting impression compels us to hold to the avowal that there is a deficit on the side of criticism as compared with the state of things in the other literary provinces.

## II

And this brings us to the arresting verdict of Mr. Mackail, in his admirable critical introduction to the volume of selections entitled *Coleridge's Literary Criticism*, that 'all criticism necessarily becomes obsolete'. It is quite judicially grounded. Coleridge, the critic notes, believed himself to have found in criticism, as he desired, a 'central point, some general rule founded in reason, or the faculties common to all'. And, the critic continues:

'Other critics before him, and others after him, have thought the same. No such point exists. It is for ever being sought, and for ever eluding the seeker: it shifts before him as he advances towards it, like the retreating horizon. The history of criticism, like the history of poetry itself, is one of perpetual progress; for criticism is itself a function of life, and life does not stand still. The radiant point from which all the swarming streams of light issue, from which or by which alone they fall into intelligible order, is itself moving with incalculable speed and on a curve of which we cannot trace the law'.

The words italicised (by the present writer) set up a difficulty. We have been assuming that in poetry there has been much 'permanent' achievement, as compared with the literature of criticism. Is the world's poetry, then, as a testable product, on precisely the same footing with its criticism? If the reasons given be the true reasons

for the obsolescence of all criticism, is it in this respect different either from poetry or history, from science or philosophy? The three last named certainly come under the description. Wordsworth, we remember, claimed for poetry that, if genuine, it is 'as permanent as pure science'; but we do not now think of 'science' as an unchanging formulation of truth. Science is for ever being readjusted, history rewritten, philosophy revised, for the reasons which Mr. Mackail so well sets forth in abstract.

But are 'fine letters', are poetry and prose fiction and drama, in exactly the same category? If so, what precisely is the point of the verdict that

'all *criticism* necessarily becomes obsolete. Its reference is to a synthesis of life which is provisional and evanescent. It bases itself on a momentary configuration of human intelligence, which it treats as though it were a fixed chart giving ascertained distances and relations. Thus, also, it is that no criticism, *in another sense*, ever becomes obsolete: for it is part of history; and history is alive'.

Our question appears to be answered at the close of the paragraph. But how do we now stand? Is there 'another sense' of the word 'obsolete'? History, it must be meant, is 'alive' as a phenomenon noted: the actual course of past events remains part of our apperception of reality; and past criticism, as a product of men's thought and utterance, is a part of the history—the bad criticism in common with bad action. But are those combined propositions *in pari materia*? Only if we sharply distinguish between *historia*, the actual series of events; and history = historiography, the attempt of a retrospective mind to *state*, co-ordinate, explain and comment the series.

Now, the primary proposition, that all criticism necessarily becomes obsolete, carries the evident meaning that the judging process *as such* does so, in that it fails to satisfy later judgment; and in that sense the statement holds good equally of the process of historiography, save



in so far as we recognise that certain primary documents, whether or not in themselves histories, must stand as constituting *pro tanto* our knowledge of the events they record. But even those documents are liable to discount as testimony; and all synthetic historiography, combining such evidence into a *critical* and explanatory narrative, is surely, if more slowly, as obsolescent as is criticism in the sense of the opening proposition. And this for the reasons given by Mr. Mackail. The final sentence, then, does not compose with what precedes. 'Obsolete' and 'never obsolete' are posited, as Mr. Mackail avows, in different senses of the term; and we must add that they are on disparate logical planes, or, as William James would say, in different logical universes. It seems inexpedient to introduce the second force at all, as it tends to disable the word.

The residual truth would seem to be that criticism in general does necessarily become obsolete as synthetic historiography does, as science does, as philosophy does; for all of those procedures alike come under Mr. Mackail's philosophic predication of obsolescence. And when we remember that he certainly supposed *that* predication to be (at least relatively) *non-obsolescent*, we are moved to ask whether all such dicta do not necessarily carry the implication that in cognising the relativity of truth we reach what seems to be an inexpugnable truth, or, let us say, a more permanent truth than those impugned by the discovery.

And, to come to the practical issue, we really reach such an impression from time to time, alike in philosophy, in science, and in historiography; and it is just such an impression that makes us label certain philosophers, scientists, and historians as great and memorable. And, in the terms of the case, criticism—whether in the large sense that includes philosophic and scientific and historical criticism or in the special sense of literary criticism,

which is what we are now considering—is conceivably capable of being relatively as valid as any of these, or as the constructive procedure of the best science, philosophy, and historiography, and therefore ought not to be ranked as obsolescent in contrast with these. After all, we live by bread, so to speak; and criticism, abstractly considered, *may* be at least as good intellectual bread as any other sort of mental food.

But Mr. Mackail carries us yet another step. It is after a searching look over Coleridge's criticism of Shakespeare, ending with a citation of a strictly impressionistic picture by him of a play as paralleling an April day, that the critic writes:

'This is hardly criticism in any formal sense: it is the sort of criticism in which words are used with the effect of music. Music does not argue. Art explains nothing. And criticism, in the hands of an artist, *is itself art*'.

Perhaps the accomplished critic would admit that he has here in a way repeated the procedure he assigns to Coleridge: on which view he will perhaps grant that his dictum about music, too, is hardly criticism in any formal sense, though it seems to be proffered as such. But he must have meant his final proposition in some larger sense than that of 'art of word music'; and here we come again to the question whether criticism as such is any otherwise obsolescent than is art. Concerning art, we are wont to think that, not only in the factitious sense in which all art, *qua* part of history, is 'never obsolete', great art is just the art which does not become obsolete in the sense in which bad art does. For we surely do, all of us, think of some literary and plastic art as artistically obsolete and of some as enduringly valid.

And here, in a quite concrete way, we seem to get to solid ground. If Homer and Sappho and Catullus are rightly to be classed as permanently great or fine artists, then the judgment to that effect which has been passed

in so many successive generations was, and remains, a right judgment. And whereas we are presumably agreed that criticism in the literary sense is not merely a just judgment but a constructive and satisfying statement of the reasons intellectually justifying a judgment, there may have been a good deal of criticism in the past which, if we had it, would be no more obsolete for us than the art it estimated. I will not here run extra risks of strife by calling up special utterances of Aristotle, or so-named Longinus, or Horace; but perhaps it will be granted me that in greater or less measure those judges passed well-reasoned judgments, illuminating aspects of art, and strengthening men's hold of their artistic heritage.

If such agreement be possible, we might even hope to reach another, on the old question whether we are dealing with an art or with a science. Long ago Sainte-Beuve, probably thinking of his own method and product, decided that criticism is an art (by which he apparently meant an art of presentment, of selection, of portraiture) that could not be science because moral science was still so imperfect. But Sainte-Beuve none the less assumed, I think, that in his presentments he was giving us the essential truth of a case so far as the data went. And wherein does such a procedure, when it includes not merely a biographic but a critical presentment, differ from scientific procedure, save inasmuch as it consciously seeks, as a rule, to give literary pleasure as well as judicial satisfaction? There is surely an art of words, of statement, that extends beyond or apart from the art which suggests 'word music'; an art of inference and synthesis which reaches a purified conceptual truth on a literary problem. And if we do not let ourselves be entangled by lax connotations of the term 'science', which suggest an absolute truth not really attained by most science, we might with much justice term *such* art scientific.

It is after saying there may be a great deal of unscientific

thought about mechanical energy, and hydrocarbons, and iocene deposits, and malacopterygii, that Clifford writes:

‘For scientific thought does not mean thought about scientific subjects with long names. There are no scientific subjects. The subject of science is the human universe, that is to say, everything that is, or has been, or may be related to man’.

And again:

‘What is the domain of science? It is all possible human knowledge which can rightly be used to guide human conduct’.

Is not the great artist, in fine, as such more scientific than the less? Does not Rembrandt know the science of the procedure of portraiture much more perfectly than does the average artist? True, he gives us the *result* of his science, which is pure art, not the statement of it *as* science. But that is just what the best criticism does in the end, even though it gives its reasons for its judgments, thereby satisfying the scientific spirit, where the mere impressionist (if such a critic there be) fails to satisfy it. The upshot of the old debate over Truth and Art seems to be that what makes truth Art is the special selective and expressive vision of the artist. And that very specification holds good of the ideal or ‘superior’ critic, who must have in at least some directions a delicate sensitiveness of perception and expression, which he communicates through his work. To say that in that case he is *not* scientific *but* artistic seems an arbitrary refusal to recognise how the spirit of truth connects and underlies art and science, and how the spirit of science operates beyond the sphere of the physically measurable without loss of birthright.

### III

Whatever may be the measure of agreement or disagreement on those issues, it will perhaps be commonly conceded that at least the difficulty of good criticism has been to some extent proved, doubtless indirectly more than directly. And that is the most practical aspect of the

whole matter. Most criticism is bad because it has been too lightly gone about. Much even of the work of the most acclaimed critics has been thus wrought, even where their knowledge of the subject matter is adequate. It is easy, indeed, to overestimate the importance of knowledge, in the sense of learning, in certain kinds of criticism. A quite good criticism of a given novel or poem may be produced by a thoughtful and percipient person without any resort to the comparative method. But the snares of criticism in general may be classed as those set up by defect of real knowledge, defect of æsthetic percipience, defect of logical discipline, and defect of judicial sense or scruple; and it is hard to say which is the more serious.

Knowledge is in general required, to begin with, for the perception of relative merit. As the juvenile, so the ill-read adult, tends to see signal charm in work which falls far short of the charm of the best, and so to give praise where there is no notable merit. And when even the fairly well-read critic proceeds to found his praise on what he reckons a rarity of effect, it is heavily discounted when we discover that he is praising an echo.

Less readily to be taken to heart, perhaps, though certainly more obvious, is the snare of irreflection, of inconsiderateness, the danger of bias, of favouritism, of prejudice, of sheer iniquity. That is indeed the aspect of most criticism which oftenest arouses protest; though Lang's remark concerning the mass of journalist critics, 'These fellows don't know much', has doubtless been echoed by every assailed author. And it is the prevailing arbitrariness of criticism, the frequency in it of the 'blind spot', of oracular error, of personal or doctrinal animus, of downright foul play, that tends to maintain the disparaging estimate of the whole business. The critic has 'the means to do ill deeds' in a degree denied to the artist, the man of science, the poet, or the philosopher; and the ugly truth is that, accordingly, he far oftener does them.

To say, indeed, that he is generally a journalist is to say nearly everything. The business in hand being the making of an immediate effect, with small time for reverie and less for research, the outcome is likely to be either genial hedging or such 'scoring' as may be held to make good copy. The very impulse to add some critical thinking, some analysis and synthesis, raises new risks by deepening the difficulty with no time for circumspection. When it is realised that no reviewer can earn a living by carefully reading and carefully reviewing books, the question is on that side concluded. It is idle to ask from the journalist services which are not paid for. He sufficiently earns our thanks when he is scrupulous enough to avoid reckless aspersion, to commit himself with moderation whether he praises or blames, and to give the reader a tolerable notion of what a book tries to do. If only he always did that, with or without literary sparkle, still more if he often gave, as he sometimes does, a thoughtfully just judgment, he would be a public benefactor.

It is when criticism is ostensibly leisured, whether or not it be duly paid for, that it challenges high standards. If it be not just, if it be not informed and technically competent, if it be not intellectually adequate to the problem, it incurs censure of a kind not applicable to bad poetry or unsound philosophy or faulty fiction—censure, in fact, such as is fitly to be passed on the judge who gives a demonstrably unjust decision. It sets up a sense of moral as well as intellectual evil, and this as it were gratuitously. And when, as may happen, it achieves its ill effect with literary skill, it would seem to justify a special severity of retaliation, inasmuch as there is little likelihood of an effective preventive exposure without the arousing of a countervailing resentment. Hence the visionary desire often felt by honest critics, since Poe, for a journal which should pillory critical iniquities. Visionary, one calls it, because no such periodical could find a paying public.

And, indeed, resentment would be only too likely to yield further miscarriages of justice. Only when critics in the mass are deeply impressed by the *difficulty* of their task can we reasonably hope to see realised such a standard of criticism in literary matters as is now substantially realised in matters of natural science by a sense of the surrounding presence of intelligences not to be swayed by rhetoric or sophistry or any attempt to impose mere individual will on the general mind. As it is, the majority of critics have still no such sense of a rigorous impersonal tribunal which they must convince if they would keep their credit; and, lacking it, they do little towards creating it.

To deny that there are shining exceptions, indeed, would be to commit the kind of critical sin above arraigned. When one finds, in one thin volume, two such critiques as Dr. Bradley's essay on Jane Austen and Mr. John Bailey's on 'The Grand Style' (to say nothing of other convincing and satisfying work of critical discrimination by these and other masters) one feels that here is almost leaven enough to leaven the whole lump, and so to raise the critical calling to an unquestionable worthiness. For such ministry has really more 'creative' value than a wilderness of but fairly good fiction and poetry, or much non-original philosophy so-called. Proceeding on new and true thinking, it communicates new and true thought, at once æsthetic and reflective. But it lies in the conditions of most critical production that the right kind of work is rare. It would almost seem that the men capable of applying a scientific rectitude of judgment to 'fine' literature as such are in general deflected to fields in which they can count on a wider appreciation of exact and just work than they can in that of literature. Or is it that they actually do realise, and shun, that greater difficulty of right achievement above affirmed—a difficulty consisting, finally, in the right estimation of a larger

number of *relativities* than arise (for instance) for the man of science or the historian?

Perhaps the difficulty might be made more clear by illustration. Leslie Stephen was a critic of solid qualifications, who guided many a reader in his day to thoughtful and appreciative reading alike in fine letters and in polemic. In his essay on Charlotte Brontë, girding up his loins advisedly to revise Swinburne, he captures our attention by the declaration that 'After all, though criticism cannot boast of being a science, it ought to aim at something like a scientific basis, or at least to proceed in a scientific spirit'. And yet in doing this he achieves an amount of critical self-contradiction depressing to contemplate. Beginning with *Villette* and *Jane Eyre*, he first posits that 'All the minor characters, with scarcely an exception, are simply portraits, and the more successful in proportion to their fidelity'.<sup>1</sup> Again:

'The amazing vividness of her portrait-painting is the quality which more than any other makes her work unique amongst modern fiction. Her realism is something peculiar to herself; and *only the crudest of critics could depreciate its merits on the ground of its fidelity to facts. The hardest of all feats is to see what is before our eyes*'.

And then, within ten pages, we have thus:

'In one sense Paul Emanuel is superior even to such characters as [Don Quixote, Uncle Toby, and Colonel Newcome]. He is more real: he is so real that we feel at once that he must have been drawn from a living model, though we may leave some indefinite margin of idealisation. If the merit of fiction were simply to approach to producing illusion, we might infer that Paul Emanuel was one of the first characters in the world of fiction. But such a test *admittedly* implies an erroneous theory of art; and, in fact, the intense individuality of Paul Emanuel is, in a different sense, the

<sup>1</sup> Whereupon follows the unhappy pronouncement that 'it seems to be an identical proposition that the study of her [Charlotte Brontë's] life is the study of her novels'. Already confusion has set in.



most serious objection to him. *He is a real human being* who gave lectures at a particular date in a *pension* at Brussels. We are as much convinced of that fact as we are of the reality<sup>o</sup> of Miss Brontë herself; but the fact is also a presumption that he is not one of those great *typical* characters, the creation of which is the highest triumph of the dramatist or novelist. There is too much of the temporary and accidental—too little of the permanent and essential.

We all know and love Uncle Toby, but we feel quite sure that no such man ever existed except in Sterne's brain. . . .'

—and so on, to the end of establishing that Uncle Toby is something artistically higher than Paul Emanuel.

Granted, for the argument's sake, that he may be, what becomes of the claim that he is a 'typical' creation? Of what class or species can he be typical, if he is unique? Are Lear and Falstaff, in turn, typical, in any cogitable sense of that term? And, finally, how are we to solve the contradiction of the specific praise of realistic truth in portraiture with the disparagement of a realistic portrait as such? The collapse becomes the more grievous when we find Rochester, in turn, expressly dismissed by the same critic as a failure because 'he does not appear to me to be *a real character at all*'. It may be *a priori* arguable that a character portrait may be either inferior because it is real or bad because it is not real, but a critic should not make the assumption implicitly. As a matter of sheer fact, Rochester *may* have been done from a model; whereas we know that Paul Emanuel was not an exact portrait of M. Héger.<sup>1</sup> Plainly, it could not have been. Stephen's assumptions go the way of his reasoning. And he counters his own further argument as to lack of large relation in the Paul portrait when he writes that 'a professor lecturing a governess on composition is revealed as a potential Napoleon'.

<sup>1</sup> It has been suggested to me that the character is partly a development from a personage in *Consuelo*.

## IV

Stephen, it is fairly clear, came to an elusive problem in æsthetics without any alert perception, repeating as an axiom a current judgment without realising the implications, both after and before putting a judgment which clashed with that. He thus leaves us to find out for ourselves the solution of an æsthetic dilemma which he did not see—a dilemma which, perhaps, is traceable back to the false æsthetic crux of 'the beautiful' and 'the characteristic', in which the late Mr. Bosanquet plants himself and us at the outset of his *History of Æsthetics*. Be it far from us to pretend to solve it here. It might seem, indeed, no very difficult matter to clear up the confusion wrought by Stephen in the case put; but the fact that he wrought it, in an undertaking begun with a profession of concern for scientific method, seems a sufficient hint of the snares of the critic's task. A previous attention to the long debate over Truth and Art in painting, with a due sense of the precaution required over analogies in the arts, might have averted at least the completeness of his miscarriage.

One more illustration, taken because it is the nearest to hand, may usefully reveal the risks of sheer individualistic injustice in the seat of judgment, on the part of performers reckoned fit for the place. In the *Times' Literary Supplement*, the other day, a critic, honest and impartial and instructed enough to praise highly the prose of Bentham's 'Fragment on Government', and to pay just tribute to Bentham's total achievement, pronounced of that performance that 'it was grossly unfair' inasmuch as it treated Blackstone as a champion of the law in general whereas he was merely its expositor, doing in that capacity an indispensable task. As the remembering reader of Bentham knows, it is the critic's statement that is 'grossly unfair'—grossly, that is, in point of completeness, though he is visibly without malice. The issue he

puts as unfairly ignored by Bentham is the very issue that Bentham expressly put.

A wary reader or critic might have divined that Bentham *could not* have done what the critic charges on him. He was bound to see and say that a simple expositor of the law is not merely not called upon to be its censor but is in propriety almost barred from that function. Blackstone, nevertheless, had constituted himself the champion of the law even to the extent of imputing insolence and arrogance to those who presumed at any point to assail it, and had on that score actually been stringently retorted on, before Bentham wrote, by writers whom he had so attacked. All this Bentham incisively indicates. He may have unfairly overstated the extent of Blackstone's championship (partly revoked in the later editions) of unjust laws, but his critic has at least more unfairly understated it, besides imputing to Bentham an impossible exorbitance of critical iniquity.

And this is itself no uncommon degree of critical misdemeanour in English journalism of the ostensibly leisured order. For sheer lack of scruple and vigilance, men dealing out judgment as with authority misstate heedlessly historic fact, falsify the theses they profess to assail, and blacken the intellectual repute of the dead and the living. Morley, alive to those practices in his day, once ventured to claim for Carlyle that his criticism was at least never 'indecently absurd'. The sad fact is that at times it actually was; and that that is no rarity in our critical records. Though the sheer advance of scholarly practice is gradually forcing higher standards in the criticism that deals professionally with questions of fact and general judgment, there has not been attained even in that field the intellectual vigilance and rectitude that are now normal in scientific debate; while in literary matters involving æsthetic dispute we have not security for critical 'decency' even in the *Times' Literary Supplement*, where the swaggerer, the standing type of incom-

petence, is still free at times to dismiss as insane any thesis he has omitted to examine, or is unable to understand.

Turning from the aspect of practice to the aspect of the theoretic ideal, we seem but to be facing the eternal drama of human divagation, as it is wrought in the field of the collective life. The ideal is so august a thing—the observance of perfect justice, the reaching of sifted truth, through the brooding survey of all the vital data: a procedure consummated, it may be, in something ultimately comparable to a portrait by Rembrandt, an essay by Elia, a summary by Aristotle, an induction by Darwin, or an analysis by Hume. The average practice is so poor a thing—the venting of self-will, the gratification of malice against the troublesome innovator, the fling of disturbed habit against the new form, the method of insolence as saving the labour of the method of argument, the pose and procedure of Pooh Bah turned man of letters. That instructed men should be content to play such a part, at this time of day, is a chagrin to the humanist.

Is it that, after all, they do see the difficulty of the ideal, and choose to minister to the appetites of the moment rather than labour to distil a cordial which only the few will drink? ‘Who am I that I should be just?’ wrote Mr. Shaw once, at a stage before it had occurred to him to masquerade as Chief Justice. For others, there is still the question, ‘Who am I that I should don the ermine without a high concern to keep it unstained, or without the adjuration in my ears, “As I judge, may I be judged”.’

# COUSIN FANNY AND COUSIN ANNIE

*By* C. K. SCOTT MONCRIEFF

## I

THE house seemed very big, that first day, to Alec; he was so little, and it was so dark and full of wonderful things, with doors everywhere behind which there must be more wonderful things still hidden. And it was quite a long way across the drawing-room to the chair in which Cousin Fanny was sitting, so that she looked up as the door opened and had time to make her face smile before he reached her. Alec could make his face smile, too, in the big mirror with legs in his mother's room, but his smiled more quickly than Cousin Fanny's, and by the time she had stroked his head and asked him how his father was her face was quite sad again, and he thought that she must be sad because his father and mother were going back to India, and he loved Cousin Fanny for being sad, but her sadness made him so sad that he almost began to cry. Then Cousin Fanny seemed frightened, and felt in a crumpled little paper bag on the table beside her until she found a lozenge like a blackberry which she told him to put in his mouth and suck carefully; and while he was sucking it carefully she said, with a little noise in her throat which made him want to laugh: 'Run away now and see if Annie has something nice for you'. And Alec's mother, who had been standing behind him, took him out of the room and downstairs and through one of the doors into another room which was quite small and very hot, and full of gold and silver things, dish-covers and pots and pans, and a little person in a very dirty dress ran to meet him and caught him under the arms and put

him standing on the table, and walked all round and clucked her tongue at him and said.. 'Well, well'. And this was Annie. And Alec's mother left him there and went back to talk to Cousin Fanny, and before he got down from the table Annie told him that his father had stood on the same table when he was no bigger than Alec, 'and now he can eat grass off the top of my head', she said; and that was so funny, Alec laughed and looked at the top of her head to see if there really was any grass on it. And then he kissed her on her forehead, which was very shiny because she had to stand all day before the hot fire, and she lifted him down from the table and brought out a little mug with a picture of a hen and two chickens on it, and gave him his tea (which was only milk really, with a lump of sugar to sweeten it) and a little cake which she had baked for him, with ten currants on the top making a big A. And Alec said: 'I can eat currants off the top of my cake!' and Annie laughed. And she told him the names of all the pots and pans, and showed him what was in each of the boxes with pictures on the sides, and the box with the Queen's picture had tea in it, and the box with the picture of a poor Indian standing in a paddy-field had rice; and that made Alec sad because his father and mother were going to India next day. And then there was a noise in the corner, and a big hairy beast came and put his face on the table beside Alec and glared at him with eyes that were bright green like glass marbles; and Alec was frightened, but Annie said that it was only Cousin Fanny's dog, Gelert, and that he was very gentle. So Alec made friends with Gelert, and Gelert was very gentle with him, though Alec never liked the smell Gelert made when he breathed in Alec's face. But Gelert knew not to lick Alec's face, and Alec liked him for that.

And after Annie had told him the name of everything in the kitchen, and Elizabeth, the maid, had come in and talked to them for a little, and they had showed him the

photograph of poor Margaret, who had been the maid there before Elizabeth, and had been found lying in a pool of blood, his mother took him away, and he said good-night to Cousin Fanny, and his mother put him in a big iron bed in the room which was to be his very own; and when he was saying his prayers and had asked God to bless all the people he knew, his mother reminded him: 'And Cousin Fanny', and Alec repeated, 'And Cousin Fanny'; and then he went on 'and Cousin Annie, and make me good 'n 'beadjent for Jesus Christ's sake, amen'. And his mother must have told Cousin Fanny when she went downstairs again, because next day, when his mother had gone to India, and he and Cousin Fanny were both feeling very sad, she smiled at him quite suddenly and said: 'So you've found another cousin, Alec?' and Alec didn't know what she meant until she went on: 'Annie's your cousin now, too, I hear'. She spoke in such a queer voice that Alec thought she was angry, but he soon found out that she had a great many voices, and it depended on what she was saying which she used; and she was very often sad, but never angry.

## II

Cousin Annie told Alec that Cousin Fanny was sad not because his parents had gone to India, but because it was October. Her mother's birthday had been in October, and she was always sad then, but she was sadder still in May because that had been when her mother had died. Alec remembered May because the Queen's birthday was the twenty-fourth of then, and his mother had taken him to the barracks to see the Regiment on parade, and his father riding on a horse; and Cousin Annie told him that it was on the Queen's Birthday that Cousin Fanny's mother had died, and he was never to say anything about the Queen's Birthday to Cousin Fanny. So Alec said that he had never been told about Cousin Fanny's mother

dying then, and Cousin Annie explained that it had been a great many years ago, before Alec was born, and when his father had been quite a little boy. And Alec wondered, because his birthday was in October too, and he thought that perhaps he might have to die on the Queen's Birthday, when his father was riding on a horse in India. And when his birthday came he did not tell Cousin Fanny, because it was still October, but Cousin Fanny knew about his birthday and gave him a lovely present, and did not look sad all day. And when he was just going to bed he said: 'Thank you very much for my nice birthday, and my lovely present, but I didn't want you to know'. And she said, 'Know what, dear?' And Alec had to explain: 'About my birthday, because it's October'. And Cousin Fanny looked frightened for a moment, and then she took him in her arms and kissed him a great many times, and said he was a dear boy, and they both cried a little because it was so sad about Cousin Fanny's mother being dead. But he didn't like to ask Cousin Fanny if she thought that he would have to die too on the Queen's Birthday because he had been born in October.

## III

After Christmas, Alec began to do lessons at the house next door with the Watsons. Mrs. Watson had a great many children, and two of the girls were younger than Alec, and George was a little older but not so big. Mr. Watson was dead, too, but Mrs. Watson didn't seem at all sad, and Alec thought she was like the old woman who lived in a shoe; she had so many children she didn't know what to do. Their governess was called Miss Spearman, and she used to teach them lessons all morning, and then they had schoolroom dinner together, and she took them for a walk in the afternoon. But presently Miss Spearman went away, and another governess came who was prettier and not so old, and made the children



laugh at their lessons; and they forgot about Miss Spearman.

Alec used to have breakfast with Cousin Fanny before he went to his lessons, and after breakfast Cousin Fanny told him to ring the bell, and Annie came in with a Bible and a Book of Meditations, and Elizabeth put two chairs against the sideboard; and there was a hole in the sideboard between where the two chairs went, with a bowl full of water in case Gelert wanted a drink when he came into the dining-room, and there was a stick of sulphur in the water which was good for Gelert, Elizabeth said, and had always been there; and Cousin Fanny read Prayers. It was very dark in the winter mornings, and Cousin Fanny had to have the gas lighted, to see. And she read a chapter out of the Bible in a deep voice like a man's, and a Meditation for the Day in a very sad voice, and then she made a little noise in her throat, and the servants knelt down, and Alec was still too little, so he put his face on the table with his hands over his eyes, and Cousin Fanny said a long prayer, which Alec thought she made up out of her head, but Annie told him the prayers were all written down in a book that Cousin Fanny's mother used to have, long ago. And when she said the prayer her voice became very high and sweet, like the fifes at the barracks when they played Retreat, and sometimes the gas flickered and said 'peep' in a voice just like Cousin Fanny's, and Alec peeped through his fingers and saw Cousin Fanny's lips moving, and then he peeped at Annie and Elizabeth kneeling, and he thought how surprised God would be if He looked in at the window and saw their two backs leaning against the sideboard. And Alec laughed; but afterwards he said to Cousin Fanny that he was sorry he had laughed at Prayers, and he told her why, and Cousin Fanny told him that nothing could surprise God.

On Sundays Cousin Fanny took him with her to church,

where the clergyman was a very good man all the same, but he had a rumbling voice and Alec could not understand what he said. But when the hymns came everybody else stood up and sang, and Cousin Fanny sang in a very sweet and sad voice, and there was a noise in the organ which had a voice just like Cousin Fanny, but she did not stand up and Alec thought that it was perhaps because her mother was dead, and that the noise in the organ was perhaps her mother's voice, it was so like her own; but Annie told him that the reason Cousin Fanny did not stand up at the hymns was her varicose veins, and that she was a perfect martyr to them. And Cousin Fanny told him that the noise in the organ was called the *Vox Humana*, which was a Latin name, because it was so like a very beautiful human voice.

One day Alec and the Watsons had to say a piece of poetry and it was about a dog called Gelert who saved a little boy's life, and his master killed him by mistake. And Alec said that the poetry was all wrong, because Gelert was still alive and slept on a sack in Cousin Fanny's kitchen. And the Watsons all laughed at him, because they knew the poetry must be true, since it was in a book. And after that there was a time when Alec was very ill, and the brass knob at the foot of his bed used to grin at him like a mischievous monkey, and queer people used to come into his room and chatter, and when the blue blind was down over the window he saw words printed on it in capital letters that he couldn't read, and faces looking at him through it, and he thought he was going for a walk with the Watsons, and they all vanished and an impudent little man came out from behind a milestone and jumped over his head. And the impudent little man followed Alec home and he *would* jump over his head, but Gelert came out of the kitchen and ate the impudent little man up. And Alec felt quite well again, and looked round, and there was Cousin Annie sitting

beside his bed. And he said to her: 'There was such an impewdent little man, and he *would* jump over my head'. And Cousin Annie went to the door and said something to somebody outside, and presently Cousin Fanny came in, and when she saw how well he was she cried, and knelt down beside him and said a little prayer, and then she went downstairs and sent a telegram to his father and mother in India, which Annie said was the first telegram that had gone out of that house for twenty years. And the wonderful thing was that Alec found he had been ill for such a long time that the Queen's Birthday was over, and it was June, and he knew he was going to go on living for ever. And Cousin Fanny told him that she and Annie had been in the room with him, turn about, all the time he was ill.

After his illness Alec was not strong enough for lessons, and Cousin Fanny said he might play in any part of the house, except the bathroom because there was a hose-thing there that would squirt water in little tiny drops all over the room and into the passage, and she showed him many beautiful things. There was a picture of her father, his Uncle Archie, who had been a General in India, sitting on a horse with a native servant holding the bridle so that the horse shouldn't move until the picture was finished. And there was a little picture of a lady with her hair dressed very high on her head, who would have been Cousin Fanny's mother if she had only lived, but she had died out in India when she was still quite young and Uncle Archie had married Cousin Fanny's real mother after that. Cousin Fanny didn't seem very sad about Uncle Archie, but that was because he had died so long ago that even Annie didn't remember him, but the maid who was there then had told her that he used to use the most terrible language, because he had been so much in India and in the Mutiny. Annie had come to the house when Cousin Fanny was still a little girl with her mother,

and then her mother was very sad all the year round because Uncle Archie was dead. And there was another picture, of Cousin Fanny's mother, but it was covered with a black curtain, because Cousin Fanny thought it was wrong to look at people's pictures when they were dead, only one day when Elizabeth was dusting the room she moved the curtain, and Alec saw the picture, and it was quite a young lady with a bare neck and bare arms and a flower in her hand. And the lady smiled at Alec, so she could not have been sad when the picture was painted. And there was a big fan on the wall like a peacock's tail; only it was hard like wood, and there were little mirrors at the ends of the feathers. And there was another picture of people dancing under a tree, which Cousin Fanny said was very precious, because her mother had bought it from a man who sold pictures. And there was an Indian cabinet full of little things made of mother-of-pearl: a card-case and a needle-case and a thimble and a thing for winding silk, and a lot of other things (but Cousin Fanny couldn't remember what they were for) and counters that did for playing games. And there was a set of big ivory chessmen, and the castles were elephants with little castles on their backs, and the white bishops were like a lady Cousin Fanny knew, so that Alec wanted to laugh when the lady came to call, which she often did on Thursdays, and wanted to bring out one of the white bishops to show her how like her it was; and they all stood upon little carved stands except the red queen who had broken her stand, and had a lump of red sealing-wax underneath instead, which made her bob backwards and forwards when you put her on the board. And that always made Alec laugh too. But Cousin Fanny couldn't remember who had put the sealing-wax under the red queen. And the red king and a lot of the pawns were missing, so that when Alec played chess with Cousin Fanny they just used a common set of wooden chessmen.

And in the corner of the room there was a big piano, and Alec used to lift the lid and play a few notes, and when he let the lid fall Cousin Fanny would look up from her chair and say: 'Gently, dear!' And Alec thought of a great joke, and he used to lift the lid and play a note very loud and then pretend to let the lid fall, so that Cousin Fanny should look up and say: 'Gently, dear!' when he had the lid in his hand all the time. But sometimes the lid did fall and hurt his fingers, and then he would pretend nothing had happened, and go down to the kitchen and tell Annie, and she would go to a tin box on a shelf on the dresser which had a picture on it of kittens playing with cherries, and give him a handful of sultanas.

There was a garden behind the house, in which he was allowed to play on really fine days. It was not a very big garden, but some of the flowers were interesting, especially the Canterbury bells because they were like real bells, and the double daisies because they were like little red door-mats, only round. And in the corner was a barrel for rain-water, and an old kennel in which Gelert used to sleep long ago, and Alec thought that had perhaps been when Cousin Fanny's mother was alive, because there wasn't room for Gelert then in the house. But when he thought of Cousin Fanny's mother sleeping on an old sack on the kitchen floor, he laughed, it was so absurd; and Annie told him that Cousin Fanny's mother had died long before Gelert was a puppy even. The birds in the garden were called starlings, and they used to eat the porridge Annie threw out of the scullery window after everybody had had breakfast.

## IV

Alec had had two more birthdays at Cousin Fanny's when his mother came home from India because she had not been at all well. She was surprised to see what a big boy Alec had grown, and told Cousin Fanny that she would never have known him. And Cousin Fanny said: 'Then

I hope you'll let him stay with me'. But presently his mother told Alec that they were going away together, and a lady was coming with them who, Annie told him, was called Madam-as-well. Madam-as-well was very tall and came from Brussels, and she did not speak very much except in French, so Alec would have to learn French, to talk to her. He did not like Madam-as-well at first, but Cousin Fanny said: 'She's a Protestant, and that's always something to be thankful for'. So afterwards when Madam-as-well was angry with him and boxed his ears, he remembered that she was a Protestant, and was thankful, though he didn't know what a Protestant was. Sometimes she was angry all day, except when they were having their meals with Alec's mother, and she would tell Alec that never in any of the families she had been with had she seen such a little pig of a boy. But when she told him about the families she had been with, he didn't think they could have been very nice either, even a family called the Brombeers, who always wore silk next the skin. One day she gave him a little figure of a boy, which she said was a copy of a very famous statue in Brussels, but Alec's mother saw it and took it away; and she scolded Madam-as-well, and Madam-as-well scolded Alec and sent him to bed without the glass of milk and the biscuit he always had. And then one night Alec's mother heard him crying when Madam-as-well was downstairs having her supper, and came in and asked what was the matter, and Alec only cried more and said: 'I wish I had never been born'. And his mother whispered (but he could hear her): 'This is the last straw', and sat down beside him and put her arm round him till he fell asleep. And when he woke up in the morning Madam-as-well had gone away, and very soon he had forgotten all about her.

to a real school where he was to be a boarder, and only go to Cousin Fanny's for the holidays. And when he went back the house seemed much smaller, though the things in it were nice still, but only because they were things he remembered long ago. And Cousin Fanny was quite stupid at times, because she could not understand what he was talking about. On the first day of the holidays she asked: 'Are there any boys at school younger than you, Alec?' and he thought for a minute and said: 'Do you mean boarders?' but she was quite puzzled and didn't seem to know whether she meant boarders or the whole school, because of course some of the day-boys were heaps younger than Alec. So he changed the subject and talked to her about football, but she did not seem able to understand about that either. And at last she asked him: 'Have you said how d'ye do to Annie yet?' He had, at the front door, but he went downstairs to get away from Cousin Fanny, and Annie gave him a great welcome, pretending she had to stand on tiptoe to see his face, he was such a great big boy; and Alec was pleased, because he was still a very little boy at school. And Annie showed him a cake she had been baking as a surprise for him and Cousin Fanny at tea, but now it would only be a surprise for Cousin Fanny; and she gave him a shilling that she had in a funny little purse which she said was made of mole-skin. Alec would rather have had the purse, because he could have swopped it, when he went back to school, for things that were worth more than a shilling, but he didn't say so, of course, to Annie. And Gelert was pleased to see him too, but he only thumped his tail on the floor, because he was such an old dog now that he didn't get up when people came in. And Alec was rather glad, because he had never liked the smell of Gelert's breath when he came to the table and leaned his chin on it, though Cousin Fanny said Gelert was a great comfort to her. Next time Alec came home there was no Gelert, and

Annie told him that Gelert had had to be put away, and that he mustn't speak about it to Cousin Fanny as she was still very sad. But in the holidays after that Cousin Fanny had a little white dog that she had bought from a man in the street; and she seemed quite happy again, and the new dog barked all day long, which Gelert had never done.

Alec was able to teach Cousin Fanny a great many things that he had learned at school, and things the other boys had told him, but she did not seem very quick at learning, and he preferred to tell things to Annie, because she always knew somebody to whom exactly the same things had happened when she was a girl, and it was wonderful how small the world was. Although she was a great deal busier than Cousin Fanny, she had always time to listen to him, and very often she gave him a shilling as well. But once he was quite waxy with her. He had been reading *The Three Musketeers* at school, and had read part of *Twenty Years After* in the holidays; and they were both jolly good, he thought. One evening, when Cousin Fanny had gone out to a meeting, he went into the dining-room and found his old Mademoiselle sitting there and Annie giving her a cup of tea. It seemed that Mademoiselle had been before this to see Cousin Fanny, and had told her how poor and deserving she was, and that Cousin Fanny had been helping her. Alec did not remember her face, but she said at once that she would have known him anywhere and that he was the cleverest boy in the world. So he thought he would be polite, and said to her: 'Est-ce que vous connaissez les livres de Monsieur Alexandre Dumas, Mademoiselle?' But she looked quite shocked, and said: 'But they are novels, they are not books for little boys'. And Annie seemed puzzled, so Mademoiselle explained to her about the books, and she shook her head and said she had heard of them. And Alec knew perfectly well she hadn't, and



thought they were a pair of stupid women, and left the room.

## VI

Soon after his tenth birthday Alec heard that his mother was coming to live with Cousin Fanny, because the War had broken out in South Africa, and his father had to go to it, to fight with the other Battalion of the Regiment, which had come home when his Battalion went out to India. Alec was very proud of his father, and wore a button on the lapel of his coat with General Buller's head on it, except on Sundays; and soon he knew the names of all the places in South Africa where the War was being fought. But when he got back to Cousin Fanny's at Christmas he found his mother quite anxious, and every time the door bell rang she started, and if it was a telegraph boy she hurried out of the room. Cousin Fanny was very sad about the War, which she thought was wicked, only she did not like to say so before Alec's mother; but when she and Alec were alone she shook her head and said in a very quiet voice that war was a great wrong, and Alec argued with her and said: 'But not this War, Cousin Fanny!' But she still thought that all wars were wrong, and so Alec said: 'What about the Mutiny?' because Uncle Archie had been a General in that. And she said: 'The Mutiny was different, dear', though Alec didn't see why. But Annie liked the War, and had shaken her fist through the railings at a man who lived near and was suspected of being a pro-Boer. And in the winter after that, when the Queen died, she took the tea out of the tin that had the Queen's picture on it, and kept it afterwards in another tin with a picture of General Baden-Powell. And the tin with the Queen on it was put in the middle of the mantelpiece, next to a china dog which Alec had given Annie once when he was a little boy, to pretend it was her birthday. It seemed dreadful to Alec that the

Queen should be dead, and he could never get used to hearing people singing: 'God save the King', though of course there had been Kings in England before the Queen. But when the new stamps came out with the King's head on them he saved up enough pocket money to buy a whole set of them unused, except the higher values, which weren't stamps at all, really. Then his father came back from South Africa, and the Colonel had got a C.M.G. and the Adjutant had got the D.S.O., and he had only got a brevet, which even Cousin Fanny said was a shame, though she didn't know what a brevet was and couldn't understand when Alec explained to her; but his father said it had been like that all round. And he took a house near the barracks where the Regiment had gone, at Aldershot, and Alec used to go there for his holidays, and some of the subalterns taught him to ride; so that it was a long time before he saw Annie or Cousin Fanny again.

*(To be concluded)*

# ONE

By GEORGE ROSTREVOR HAMILTON

HOW should I separate for praise  
Beauty of body, beauty of soul,  
Who know her single-dual self  
Intrinsically whole?

Whole, not as though her spirit dwelt  
In amity of carnal sense  
With worlds of taste and touch and sight,  
And never journeyed thence,

Nor yet as though her body breathed  
Always the quintessential air  
Of ecstasy, of native lures  
And sweetness unaware:

But whole; for when her body cries,  
Her spirit leans and stoops to fill  
With passionate warmth and depth of light  
Each motion, mood and will;

And whole; for when her spirit calls,  
Her body to this grace aspires,  
To lantern in a crystal glass  
Those insubstantial fires.

# THE NOVELS OF VIRGINIA WOOLF

By E. M. FORSTER

## I

IT is profoundly characteristic of the art of Virginia Woolf that when I decided to write about it and had planned a suitable opening paragraph, my fountain pen should disappear. Tiresome creature! It slipped through a pocket into a seam. I could pinch it, chivy it about, make holes in the coat lining, but a layer of tailor's stuffing prevented recovery. So near, and yet so far! Which is what one feels about her art. The pen is extricated in time, but during the struggle the opening paragraph has escaped; the words are here but the birds have flown; 'opals and emeralds, they lie about the roots of turnips'. It is far more difficult to catch her than it is for her to catch what she calls life—'life; London; this moment in June'. Again and again she eludes, until the pen, getting restive, sets to work on its own and grinds out something like this, something totally false such as: 'Mrs. Woolf is a talented but impressionistic writer, with little feeling for form and none for actuality'. Rubbish. She has, among other achievements, made a definite contribution to the novelist's art. But how is this contribution to be stated? And how does she handle the ingredients of fiction—human beings, time, and space? Let us glance at her novels in the order of their composition.

*The Voyage Out*, was published in 1915. It is a strange, tragic, inspired book whose scene is a South America not found on any map and reached by a boat which would not float on any sea, an America whose spiritual boundaries

touch Xanadu and Atlantis. Hither, to a hotel, various English tourists repair, and the sketches of them are so lively and 'life-like' that we expect a comedy of manners to result. Gradually a current sets in, a deep unrest. What are all these people doing—talking, eating, kissing, reading, being kind or unkind? What do they understand of each other or of themselves? What relations are possible between them? Two young men, bleak and honest intellectuals from Cambridge, ask the question; Rachel, an undeveloped girl, answers it. The uneasiness of society and its occasional panics take hold of her, and nothing can exorcise them, because it is her own desire to face the truth; nothing, not even love.

They stood together in front of the looking-glass, and with a brush tried to make themselves look as if they had been feeling nothing all the morning, neither pain nor happiness. But it chilled them to see themselves in the glass, for instead of being vast and indivisible they were really very small and separate, the size of the glass leaving a large space for the reflection of other things.

Wedded bliss is promised her, but the voyage continues, the current deepens, carrying her between green banks of the jungle into disease and death. The closing chapters of the book are as poignant as anything in modern fiction, yet they arise naturally out of what has gone before. They are not an interruption but a fulfilment. Rachel has lost everything—for there is no hint of compensation beyond the grave—but she has not swerved from the course honesty marked out, she has not jabbered or pretended that human relationships are satisfactory. It is a noble book, so noble that a word of warning must be added: like all Virginia Woolf's work, it is not romantic, not mystic, not explanatory of the universe. By using a wrong tone of voice—over-stressing 'South America' for instance—the critic might easily make it appear to be all these things, and perhaps waft it towards popular success! His honesty must equal the writer's; he is offered no

ultimate good, but 'life; London; this moment in June'; and it is his job to find out what the promise entails.

Will *Night and Day* help him? It is the simplest novel she has written, and to my mind the least successful. Very long, very careful, it condescends to many of the devices she so gaily derides in her essay on *Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown*. The two principal characters are equipped with houses and relatives which document their reality, they are screwed into Chelsea and Highgate as the case may be, and move from their bases to meet in the rooms and streets of a topographical metropolis. After misunderstandings, they marry, they are promised happiness. In view of what preceded it and of what is to follow, *Night and Day* seems to me a deliberate exercise in classicism. It contains all that has characterised English fiction for good or evil during the last hundred and fifty years—faith in personal relations, recourse to humorous side shows, insistence on petty social differences. Even the style has been normalised, and though the machinery is modern, the resultant form is as traditional as *Emma*. Surely the writer is using tools that don't belong to her. At all events she has never touched them again.

For, contemporary with this full length book, she made a very different experiment, published two little—stories, sketches, what is one to call them?—which show the direction in which her genius has since moved.<sup>1</sup> At last her sensitiveness finds full play, and she is able to describe what she sees in her own words. In *The Mark on the Wall* she sees a mark on the wall, wonders what it is . . . and that is the entire story. In *Kew Gardens* she sees men, sometimes looking at flowers, and flowers never looking at men. And, in either case, she reports her vision impartially; she strays forward, murmuring, wandering, falling asleep. Her style trails after her, catching up grass and dust in its folds, and instead of the precision of the earlier

<sup>1</sup> Republished in *Monday or Tuesday*, 1921.

writing we have something more elusive than has yet been achieved in English. If a drowsy and desultory person could also be a great artist he would talk like this:

Yellow and black, pink and snow white, shapes of all these colours, men, women and children were spotted for a second upon the horizon, and then, seeing the breadth of yellow that lay upon the grass, they wavered and sought shade beneath the trees, dissolving like drops of water in the yellow and green atmosphere, staining it faintly with red and blue. It seemed as if all gross and heavy bodies had sunk down in the heat motionless and lay huddled upon the ground, but their voices went wavering from them as if they were flames lolling from the thick waxen bodies of candles. Voices. Yes, voices. Wordless voices, breaking the silence suddenly with such depth of contentment, such passion of desire; or, in the voices of children, such freshness of surprise: breaking the silence? But there was no silence; all the time the motor omnibuses were turning their wheels and changing their gear: like a vast nest of Chinese boxes all of wrought steel turning ceaselessly one within another the city murmured; on the top of which the voices cried aloud and the petals of myriads of flowers flashed their colours in the air.

The objection (or apparent objection) to this sort of writing is that it cannot say much or be sure of saying anything. It is an inspired breathlessness, a beautiful droning or gasping which trusts to luck, and can never express human relationships or the structure of society. So at least one would suppose, and that is why the novel of *Jacob's Room* (1922) comes as a tremendous surprise. The impossible has occurred. The style closely resembles that of *Kew Gardens*. The blobs of colour continue to drift past; but in their midst, interrupting their course like a closely sealed jar, rises the solid figure of a young man. In what sense Jacob is alive—in what sense any of Virginia Woolf's characters live—we have yet to determine. But that he exists, that he stands as does a monument is certain, and wherever he stands we recognise him for the same and are touched by his outline. The coherence of the book is even more amazing than its

beauty. In the stream of glittering similes, unfinished sentences, hectic catalogues, unanchored proper names, we seem to be going nowhere. Yet the goal comes, the method and the matter prove to have been one, and looking back from the pathos of the closing scene we see for a moment the airy drifting atoms piled into a colonnade. The break with *Night and Day* and even with *The Voyage Out* is complete. A new type of fiction has swum into view, and it is none the less new because it has had a few predecessors—laborious, well meaning, still-born books by up-to-date authors, which worked the gasp and the drone for all they were worth, and are unreadable.

Three years after *Jacob's Room* comes another novel in the same style, or slight modification of the style: *Mrs. Dalloway*. It is perhaps her masterpiece, but difficult, and I am not altogether sure about every detail, except when my fountain pen is in my hand. Here is London at all events—so much is certain, London chorussing with all its clocks and shops and sunlit parks, and writing texts with an aeroplane across God's heaven. Here is Clarissa Dalloway, elderly, kind, graceful, rather hard and superficial, and a terrible snob. How she loves London! And there is Septimus Warren Smith—she never meets him—a case of shell shock—very sad—who hears behind the chorus the voices of the dead singing, and sees his own apotheosis or damnation in the sky. That dreadful war! Sir William Bradshaw of Harley Street, himself in perfect health, very properly arranges for Septimus Warren Smith to go to a lunatic asylum. Septimus is ungrateful and throws himself out of the window. 'Coward', cries the doctor, but is too late. News of which comes to Clarissa as she is giving an evening party. Does she likewise commit suicide? I thought she did the first time I read the book; not at my second reading, nor is the physical act important, for she is certainly left with the full knowledge—inside knowledge—of what



suicide is. The societified lady and the obscure maniac are in a sense the same person. His foot has slipped through the gay surface on which she still stands—that is all the difference between them. She returns (it would seem) to her party and to the man she loves, and a hint of her new knowledge comes through to him as the London clocks strike three. Such apparently is the outline of this exquisite and superbly constructed book, and having made the outline one must rub it out at once. For emphasis is fatal to the understanding of this author's work. If we dared not overstress 'South America' in *The Voyage Out*, still lighter must fall our touch on London here, still more disastrous would be the application to its shimmering fabric of mysticism, unity beneath multiplicity, twin souls. . . .

Why creeds and prayers and mackintoshes? when, thought Clarissa, that's the miracle, that's the mystery; that old lady, she meant, whom she could see going from chest of drawers to dressing-table. She could still see her. And the supreme mystery which Kilman might say she had solved, or Peter might say he had solved, but Clarissa didn't believe either of them had the ghost of an idea of solving was simply this: here is one room: there another. Did religion solve that, or love?

As far as her work has a message, it seems to be contained in the above paragraph. Here is one room, there another. Required like most writers to choose between the surface and the depths as the basis of her operations, she chooses the surface and then burrows in as far as she can.

## II

After this glance we can better understand her equipment, and realise that visual sensitiveness—in itself so slight a tool for a novelist—becomes in her case a productive force. How beautifully she sees! Look at 'those churches, like shapes of grey paper, breasting the stream of the Strand', for instance. Or at 'The flames were

struggling through the wood and roaring up when, goodness knows where from, pails flung water in beautiful hollow shapes as of polished tortoiseshell; flung again and again; until the hiss was like a swarm of bees; and all the faces went out'. How beautiful! Yet vision is only the frontier of her kingdom. Behind it lie other treasures; in particular the mind.

Her remarkable intellectual powers have nothing to do with common sense—masses of roses can be gathered at Christmas for instance, and the characters in one book need bear no resemblance to their namesakes in another. Nor is she much occupied in presenting clever men and women. What thrills her—for it starts as a thrill—is the actual working of a brain, especially of a youthful brain, and there are passages in *Jacob's Room* where the process becomes as physical as the raising of a hand. Moreover she reverences learning; it gives her disinterested pleasure, increases the natural nobility of her work.

Stone lies solid over the British Museum, as bone lies cool over the visions and heats of the brain. Only here the brain is Plato's brain and Shakespeare's; the brain has made pots and statues, great bulls and little jewels, and crossed the river of death this way and that incessantly, seeking some landing, now wrapping the body well for its long sleep; now laying a penny piece on the eyes; now turning the toes scrupulously to the East. Meanwhile Plato continues his dialogue; in spite of the rain; in spite of the cab whistles; in spite of the woman in the mews behind Great Ormond Street who has come home drunk and cries all night long 'Let me in, let me in'.

The *Phaedrus* is very difficult. And so, when at length one reads straight ahead, falling into step, marching on becoming (so it seems) momentarily part of this rolling, imperturbable energy, which has driven darkness before it since Plato walked the Acropolis, it is impossible to see to the fire.

The dialogue draws to its close. Plato's argument is done. Plato's argument is stowed away in Jacob's mind, and for five minutes Jacob's mind continues alone, onwards, into the darkness. Then, getting up, he parted the curtains, and saw, with astonishing

clearness, how the Springetts opposite had gone to bed; how it rained; how the Jews and the foreign woman, at the end of the street, stood by the pillar-box, arguing.

It is easy for a novelist to describe what a character thinks of; look at Mrs. Humphrey Ward. But to convey the actual process of thinking is a creative feat, and I know of no one except Virginia Woolf who has accomplished it. Here at last thought, and the learning that is the result of thought, take their own high place upon the dais, exposed no longer to the patronage of the hostess or the jeers of the buffoon. Here Cambridge, with all its dons, is raised into the upper air and becomes a light for ships at sea, and Rachel, playing Bach upon a hotel piano, builds a momentary palace for the human mind.

But what of the subject that she regards as of the highest importance: human beings as a whole and as wholes? She tells us (in her essays) that human beings are the permanent material of fiction, that it is only the method of presenting them which changes and ought to change, that to capture their inner life presents a different problem to each generation of novelists; the great Victorians solved it in their way; the Edwardians shelved it by looking outwards at relatives and houses; the Georgians must solve it anew, and if they succeed a new age of fiction will begin. Has she herself succeeded? Do her own characters live?

I feel that they do live, but not continuously, whereas the characters of Tolstoy (let us say) live continuously. With her, the reader is in a state of constant approval. 'Yes that is right', he says, each time she implies something more about Jacob or Peter: 'yes that would be so: yes'. Whereas in the case of Tolstoy approval is absent. We sink into André, into Nicolay Rostoff during the moments they come forth, and no more endorse the correctness of their functioning than we endorse our own. And the problem before her—the problem that she has set herself, and that certainly would inaugurate a new

literature if solved—is to retain her own wonderful new method and form, and yet allow her readers to inhabit each character with Victorian thoroughness. Think how difficult this is. If you work in a storm of atoms and seconds, if your highest joy is ‘life; London; this moment in June’ and your deepest mystery ‘here is one room; there another’, then how can you construct your human beings so that each shall be not a movable monument but an abiding home, how can you build between them any permanent roads of love and hate? There was continuous life in the little hotel people of *The Voyage Out* because there was no innovation in the method. But Jacob in *Jacob’s Room* is discontinuous, demanding—and obtaining—separate approval for everything he feels or does. And *Mrs. Dalloway*? There seems a slight change here, an approach towards character construction in the Tolstoyan sense; Sir William Bradshaw, for instance, is uninteruptedly and embracingly evil. Any approach is significant, for it suggests that in future books she may solve the problem as a whole. She herself believes it can be done, and, with the exception of Joyce, she is the only writer of genius who is trying. All the other so-called innovators are (if not pretentious bunglers), merely innovators in subject matter and the praise we give them is of the kind we should accord to scientists. Their novels admit aeroplanes or bigamy, or give some fresh interpretation of the spirit of Norfolk or Persia, or at the most reveal some slight discovery about human nature. They do good work, because everything is subject matter for the novel, nothing ought to be ruled out on the ground that it is remote or indecent. But they do not advance the novelist’s art. Virginia Woolf has already done that a little, and if she succeeds in her problem of rendering character, she will advance it enormously.

For English fiction, despite the variety of its content, has made little innovation in form between the days of

Fielding and those of Arnold Bennett. It might be compared to a picture gallery, lit by windows placed at suitable intervals between the pictures. First come some portraits, then a window with a view say of Norfolk, then some more portraits and perhaps a still life, followed by a window with a view of Persia, then more portraits and perhaps a fancy piece, followed by a view of the universe. The pictures and the windows are infinite in number, so that every variety of experience seems assured, and yet there is one factor that never varies: namely the gallery itself; the gallery is always the same, and the reader always has the feeling that he is pacing along it, under the conditions of time and space that regulate his daily life. Virginia Woolf would do away with the sense of pacing. The pictures and windows may remain if they can—indeed the portraits must remain—but she wants to destroy the gallery in which they are embedded and in its place build—build what? Something more rhythmical. *Jacob's Room* suggests a spiral whirling down to a point, *Mrs. Dalloway* a cathedral.

# A NIGHT AT SEA

By IVAN BUNIN

*(Authorised Translation by Natalie A. Duddington)*

LATE in the evening the steamer going from Odessa to the Caucasus called at Eupatoria.

At once there was a regular hell on the steamer and around it. The cranes rattled, those who took in the cargo and those who handed it up from the barge below shouted furiously; the Oriental mob, fighting and shouting besieged the gangway and, carrying their bundles, struggled up on to the deck with frantic unaccountable haste, as though taking the steamer by storm; an electric lamp hanging at the top of the gangway threw a brilliant light over a dense and disorderly throng, dirty fezs and turbans, staring eyes, shoulders shoving forward, hands clutching convulsively at the rail; there was a hubbub down below, too, at the bottom steps which were continually being washed by the water; there, too, they were fighting and shouting, stumbling and clutching; there was a clatter of oars, boats full of people knocked against one another, rising on the crest of a wave then falling into the deep trough and disappearing in the darkness under the ship's side. And the dolphin-like body of the steamer, with a springy motion, swayed first to one side, then to the other.

At last the noise began to subside.

A man, with a very straight figure and square shoulders who was one of the last to come on board, gave his first-class ticket and his bag to the steward, and hearing that there were no cabins vacant went on deck. It was dark there, a few deck chairs were scattered about and only in one of them a half-reclining figure of a man covered with

a rug was discernible. The new passenger took a chair a few steps away. It was a low chair and when he sat down the canvas stretched, making a very snug and comfortable seat. The steamer heaved up and down and turned slowly, carried by the current. The soft wind of a southern summer night was blowing with a faint smell of the sea. The night, peaceful and kindly as it always is in the summer, with clear sky and tiny humble stars, was wrapped in soft and transparent darkness. The distant lights were pale and seemed sleepy because the hour was late. Soon everything on the steamer went its wonted way again, calm words of command rang out, the anchor chain clanked. . . . Then the stern began to tremble, the screws rattled, the water splashed. The lights, scattered low down on the flat shore in the distance seemed to float away. The rocking ceased.

The two passengers lay so still in their chairs that they might have been asleep. But they did not sleep; they gazed intently at one another across the darkness. At last the first one, the one who had his legs wrapped up in the rug, asked simply and calmly:

‘Are you going to the Crimea, too?’

And the second one, the man with the square shoulders, answered deliberately in the same tone of voice:

‘Yes, to the Crimea and further. I shall stay at Alupka and then go on to Gagry’.

‘I recognised you at once’, said the first.

‘And I recognised you at once, too’, answered the second.

‘A very strange and unexpected meeting’.

‘Could not be more so’.

‘It isn’t exactly that I recognised you, but I seem to have felt that you were somehow bound to appear, so that I had no need to recognise you’.

‘I had just the same experience’.

‘Indeed? Very strange. There is no denying that

after all there are moments in life which are . . . well, extraordinary. Life may not be so simple as it seems'.

'Perhaps not. But it may also be that we are at this very minute simply imagining this supposed presentiment on our part'.

'Perhaps. Yes, it is very likely. Indeed, it probably is so'.

'There, you see. We are inventing theories about life while it may be quite simple all the time, rather like that fight by the gangway just now! Why were these fools hurrying so, crushing one another?'

They were silent for a while. Then they began talking again.

'How many years is it since we met? Twenty-three?' asked the first passenger, the one who was covered with a rug.

'Yes, almost', answered the other. 'It will be twenty-three years this autumn. It is quite easy for us to reckon it up. Almost a quarter of a century'.

'A long time. A whole life. That is, I mean, both our lives are nearly over'.

'Yes, yes. Well? Are we distressed that they are over?'

'Hm! . . . Of course not. Hardly at all. It is all nonsense when we say to ourselves that it is terrible—when we try to frighten ourselves by the thought that life is over and that in another ten years or so we shall be lying in our graves. And yet, just think of it: in the grave! It is no joke'.

'Quite so. And I will tell you something more. You probably know that I made a name, as the saying is, in the medical world?'

'Of course I know. Everyone knows it. And do you know that your humble servant has also become famous?'

'Why, of course. I may say I am one of your admirers'.

'Yes, yes, two celebrities. Well, what were you going to say?'



'I was going to say that thanks to my good name as a doctor—that is, thanks to the knowledge, not very wonderful but fairly sound, which I have acquired,—I know almost for certain that I have not to live even ten years, but only several months. At the very most—a year. I suffer from a fatal disease, unmistakably diagnosed both by myself and by my colleagues. And I assure you, I still go on living almost as though there were nothing the matter. I merely smile sarcastically: You see I wanted to know better than anyone all the possible causes of death so as to win fame and live in splendour, and here I am, splendidly sure about my own death! They might have been fooling me—saying "Certainly not, my dear fellow, we'll put up a good fight for it yet"—but now how can they deceive me? It would be stupid and awkward—so awkward that they overdo their frankness instead, and say with cringing admiration "Well, honoured colleague, it is no use trying to deceive you. *Finita la commedia*".

'Are you speaking seriously?' said the first passenger.

'Perfectly', answered the second. 'And this is what is so curious. "Caius is mortal", *ergo* I shall die too, but the death is in the indefinite future. In my case, unfortunately, it is different—not in an indefinite future, but in a year's time. A year does not amount to much, you know. Next summer you will again be sailing somewhere over "the ocean's blue waves" while my noble bones will be lying in the Novodevitchy cemetery in Moscow. And the point is, that I feel hardly anything at the thought of this—and not because of my courage, as the students think when I describe my illness to them as interesting from the medical point of view, but simply through an idiotic indifference. And the people around me who know my fatal secret do not feel anything either. You, for instance—you are not horrified, are you?'

'No, I confess I am not, really.'

'And of course not in the least sorry for me?'

'No, not sorry either. And yet I suppose you have not any faith in the blissful regions where there is neither sorrow nor sighing, but only apples of paradise?'

'Faith, indeed! Is it likely?'

Again there was a silence. Then they took out their cigarette cases and began to smoke.

'And mind', said the first passenger, the one lying under the rug, 'we are not posing a bit now, not showing off before each other nor an imaginary audience. We are really speaking quite simply and without any affectation of cynicism or bitter boastfulness which always brings with it some compensation—"there, see what a position we are in, it couldn't be more terrible!" . . . We are talking simply and our silence is without any significance, any stoical wisdom. Speaking generally, man is the most voluptuous creature on earth—his sly soul knows how to draw self-gratification out of everything. But in our case I do not find even that. And our idiotic indifference, as you call it, is all the more curious because of our very peculiar relations. We are terribly closely connected, you know. Or rather, we ought to be.'

'Of course', answered the second. 'What horrible misery I caused you, really. I can imagine what you went through'.

'Yes, it was much worse than you can imagine. It truly is horrible—the nightmare that a man, a lover, a husband goes through when his wife has been carried off, snatched away from him. For whole days and nights he is almost continually, ceaselessly writhing with wounded pride, with dreadful jealous thoughts of his rival's happiness and with hopeless, desperate love—or, rather, sexual tenderness—for his lost mate. He would like both to strangle her with ferocious hatred and to overwhelm her with the most humiliating expressions of dog-like devotion and submission. It is always unspeakably horrible. But what made it worse for me is that I am not

quite the usual type of man, I have more imagination and am more sensitive than most people. So you can fancy what I suffered for years'.

'Was it really years?'

'I assure you not less than three years. And long afterwards, too, every memory of her and of you, of your intimacy with her burnt me like red-hot iron. And it is quite natural. If a man robs you, say, of your betrothed, it is endurable. But if it is a mistress or, as in our case, a wife! the woman with whom, forgive me for saying it plainly, you have slept, whose every mental and physical characteristic you know as well as you know your own five fingers! Just think what scope this leaves for jealous imagination. How can one bear her being possessed by somebody else? It is simply beyond human endurance. It was this that made me take to drink, it undermined my health and my will. It was through this that I wasted the time when my talent and all my powers were at their best. Without any exaggeration you simply broke me in two. I grew together again, of course, but what was the good? It was not my old self and it could not be. You broke into the very holy of holies of my existence. When Prince Gautama was choosing a bride and saw Yasodhara who had "a form of heavenly mould and eyes like a hind's in love time", inspired by her he performed incredible feats in competition with other youths—for instance he shot an arrow which could be heard at the distance of seven thousand miles—then he took off his pearl necklace, put it round Yasodhara and said "I have chosen her because we played in the woods together in times long gone by when I was a hunter's son and she a forest girl, my soul remembered her". She wore a veil of black and gold and the Prince looked at it and said: "She wears this veil of black and gold because myriads of years ago I saw her as a tigress in the woods: my soul remembered her!"

Forgive these poetical digressions, but there is great and

terrible truth in this. Just think of the meaning of these wonderful words about the soul remembering, and of how awful it is when this most sacred of all meetings is disturbed by an outsider. Who knows, I, too, might have shot an arrow that would resound for thousands of miles! And all of a sudden you appeared. . . .'

'Well, and what do you feel for me now?' asked the man with the square shoulders. 'Malice, disgust, thirst for vengeance?'

'Would you believe it, nothing whatever. In spite of all I said just now, nothing whatever. It is dreadful. Here's "a soul's remembrance" for you! But you know very well that I feel nothing, or you wouldn't have asked the question'.

'Yes, that's so. I know. And that, too, is dreadful'.

'And yet we do not mind. It is all dreadful, but we do not feel it at all'.

'No, not at all, really. People say "the past, the past!" But it is all nonsense. Strictly speaking, one has no past. Merely a faint echo of all that a man has once lived in'.

Once more they were silent. The steamer moved on and on, trembling; the gentle splash of sleepy waves as they hurried past, rose and fell at regular intervals; the log line twisted rapidly and monotonously behind the gurgling stern, monotonously from time to time registering something with a fine and mysterious ringing sound—'dzee-eeen'.

Then the square-shouldered man asked:

'Tell me . . . what did you feel when you heard of her death? Nothing? then, either'.

'Yes, almost nothing', answered the other. 'Most of all a certain surprise at my own indifference. I opened the paper in the morning and it was a slight shock to see "dead . . . so and so. . . ." When one is not used to it, it is very strange to see the name of a friend or relative

with the black border round it, in big print, in that ominous part of the paper. . . . Then I tried to feel sad and to think that this was the very woman who . . . But

‘ Out of indifferent lips I heard the news of death  
And nothing stirred in me when I heard it’.

I could not even feel sad. Just a faint feeling of something like pity. . . . And yet she was the very one “whom my soul remembered”, my first, cruel and lasting love. I knew her when her charm was at its height, when there was about her that almost childlike trustfulness, timidity and innocence which strikes a man’s heart so irresistibly—perhaps because in all womanliness there must be this trusting helplessness, something childish, a symbol of the fact that in a girl, in a woman, the future child lies hidden. And I was the first to whom with truly divine bliss and terror, she gave all that God had given her. It was her virginal body, the most beautiful thing in the world, that I kissed millions of times with an ecstasy the like of which I never experienced again. It was on her account that I was day and night on the verge of madness, quite literally for years. It was because of her I wept, tore my hair, attempted suicide, drank, tired out the fastest horses, destroyed in my fury my best and most valuable works. . . . But now twenty years have passed—and I looked dully at her name with a black border round it, dully imagined her in her coffin. An unpleasant idea, that’s all. I assure you this was all. And you, too, *now*—do you feel anything?’

‘ I? Well, it’s no use pretending. Hardly anything, of course. . . .’

The steamer went on and on; wave after wave rose up hissing in front, hurried by with a splash on either side of the boat, the pale, snowy path behind the stern foamed and gurgled monotonously. A soft wind was blowing, the pattern of the stars overhead was immovable over the

black funnel, the tackle and the sharp point of the fore mast.

'But do you know what?' the first passenger said suddenly, as though waking up. 'Do you know what the main point is? That I could not in any way connect her, the one who was dead, with that other one of whom I have just been telling you. I simply could not. She, that other one, was someone quite apart. And to say that I felt absolutely nothing for her, for that other, would be utterly false. So that I did not put it correctly. It was all quite wrong'.

The second passenger thought.

'Well, and what of it?' he asked.

'Why, that what we have been saying does not count'.

'I wonder', said the man with the square shoulders. 'She, that other one as you call her, is simply yourself, your idea, your feelings, in short, something entirely your own. And that means you have been moved and agitated simply about yourself. Just think it over'.

'You think so? I don't know. Perhaps. . . . Yes, it may be . . .'

'And was it for long that you were moved even about yourself? Ten minutes. Well, half an hour. A day, at the most'.

'Yes, yes. It is dreadful, but I think you are right. And where is she now? There, in that beautiful sky?'

'God only knows, my dear fellow. Most probably, nowhere'.

'You think so? Yes, yes. . . . Most probably it is so'.

The plain of the open sea lay, an almost black circle, under the light and luminous vault of the night sky. Lost in that dark round plain the little steamer dully and persistently plodded on. The pale, milky path foaming drowsily behind it, stretched endlessly into the distance where the night sky melted into the sea, where, as compared with this milkiness, the horizon seemed dark and

gloomy. The log line twisted and twisted and from time to time the faint ringing sound mournfully and mysteriously registered something.

After a silence that lasted some time the two men said simply and quietly to each another:

‘Good-night’.

‘Good-night’.

# CHERRERO

*A Note on the Mascarades of the Pays Basque*

By C. P. HAWKES

## I. *A Lord of Misrule.*

FOR many centuries during Carnival-time each year the peasant-folk of the district of La Soule in the Pays Basque have celebrated their ancient ritual of the *Mascarade*, a kind of synthesis of folk-drama and country-dance closely related to the old English mumming-play—vestiges of which are still to be witnessed in Northumbria and the West country—and to the archaic displays, half-dramatic, half-choreographic, which still survive on similar occasions in western Brittany.

Like 'the four Champions of Christendom', 'the King of Egypt', 'the Doctor', 'Father Christmas', and the rest of the *dramatis personæ* in our obsolescent folk-plays, the characters in the *Mascarade*, as regards their personalities and functions, are immutably stereotyped in accordance with strict tradition; and in many cases, the representation of a particular character is hereditary in certain families and handed down from father to son for many generations. For in the *Mascarades* the characters are everything. The interest centres entirely in the perpetuation of certain well-defined and individual rôles—the changeless types of Yeoman and hind, of Cavalier and henchman, of lawless vagabond, and established craftsman in an essential and immemorial trade. There is not in the *Mascarades*, as in the *Pastorales*—the folk-plays proper of the Basque peasantry—any connected story or traditional set of episodes on which these contrasted types may be strung together; and if ever there was, the thread of it has long ago been lost. The characters are simply represented



according to age-long custom, and, while their symbolism and dress are ordained by precedent, their acts and antics are mostly improvised according to the idiosyncrasy of each performer. The keystone of the arch which has sustained the *Mascarade* throughout the ages, the principal and most arresting figure in their traditional cast, is that of *Cherrero*, Master of the Revels, darling of the crowd, Lord of Misrule, and Autocrat of this archaic merry-making of which the origin is lost in the mists of antiquity. *Cherrero* is invariably a mountain of a man, a jovial full-flavoured rascal of six foot or so, whom Rabelais would have delighted in. With a Falstaffian ripeness and more than a quipsome hint of Touchstone he must combine a long-limbed agility rare in one of the requisite burliness and inches. The impudent familiarity and shrewdness of his japes and patter recall the waggeries of Autolycus and of the saucy varlets of Molière and Goldoni; while, in his mischief-making agility, he is akin to Pulchinello and Till Eulenspiegel; moreover, in *Cherrero* one at once discovers the prototype of Pélissier of the 'Follies', Nikita Balieff of the *Chauve-souris* and Davy Burnaby of the 'Co-optimists', who might each claim through him to represent a tradition in this sort which goes back to the dawn of European civilisation.

On some bright Sunday afternoon in Carnival-time the peasants of some village in Mauléon or the Tardets assemble in the *place* or the wide open space before the church, and with their friends from all the district round set out to enjoy themselves, with an air of having discarded for the occasion the hard-featured dourness characteristic of the *Euskaldunac* race, and of having determined in a gay unusual spirit of festivity to ignore the fact that *La vie est courte et less chagrins sont nombreuses*.

While the thronging villagers are filling the *place* with a buzz of excited anticipation, their friends and relatives

who are to take part in the *Mascarade* have been assembling behind the back-walls of the *Mairie* or in the tree-shaded garden of the *Curé's* house, to which they hurry with cloaks and paletots concealing the fantastic glories of their costumes.

When all at last are ready, the village *Bedeau* forces his way through the press, and, blowing a vigorous fanfare upon his battered trumpet, clears a lane from the *al-fresco* greenroom to a space in the centre of the crowded *place*, where the *Tchurula*, or orchestra, has already taken its stand and now strikes up a lively march-tune upon fiddles and *tambourins basques* (guitars played with a plectrum,) three-vented flutes and drums. And, all at once, comes dancing down the lane a grotesque Colossus, in appearance something between a gigantic circus-clown and a Kaffir witch-doctor. This is *Cherrero*.

A blue Basque *béret*, trimmed with a preposterous feather, sits jauntily sideways on his close-cropped head. Round a Gargantuan jerkin as multi-coloured as Joseph's, runs, like a leathern equator, a silver-buckled belt from which hangs down a row of jangling bells. A scarlet stocking cases his right leg and a white one his left, and the *alpargatas* on his surprisingly nimble feet are also of contrasting colours; while in his right hand he flourishes, not, as you might expect, a bladdered bauble, but a long-handled broom decorated with a whisking tail of coloured horsehair. And thus bedight, *Cherrero* with elephantine gambols heads the gay procession amid the welcoming plaudits of the crowd, brandishing his besom, as a Guards' Drum-major twirls his staff, with an air of sublime *grotesquerie* and droll pomposity that would draw laughter from a sexton. Behind him, and at such an interval as allows each group of characters to advance with full effect, follow the personages of the *Mascarade*, whose dress and bearing are criticized by the seniors among the onlookers in the light of long experience; for most of these gnarled

old men and women would seem in former days to have sustained the various rôles at one time or another.

## 2. *Zamalzaïn*.

First there rides *Zamalzaïn*, the hobby-horseman, dressed *cap-à-pie* in crimson, and riding a hobby-horse caparisoned in that colour, with bunches of red ribbon fluttering from his harness at every point. A long-bodied beast with a stumpy wicked head, this hobby-horse of *Zamalzaïn*'s—but for the fact that his jaws are not movable—is not unlike the 'Hob-nob' still preserved in the Museum at Salisbury, which, until Cromwellian times, played so prominent a part in civic merrymakings there and elsewhere when England still was 'merrie'. Behind *Zamalzaïn* rides his henchman and counterpart, identical with his master in every detail of accoutrement and dress, except that the colour of everything about him is a sombre and unrelieved black. Throughout the revels Master and squire are never parted, and every action and movement of the former is sedulously aped and repeated with the absurdest exaggeration by his sable mimic, who, though separately mounted, rides ever behind him like a veritable *Atra Cura*.

The pair are followed by *Zamalzaïn*'s retinue. Close on the hobby-horse's heels strides *Manichalak*, his farrier, who, carrying a hammer, bellows, and a little anvil, is here to furnish fresh shoes for his master's horse whenever—as frequently happens—that mettlesome animal needs re-shoeing. And by the blacksmith's side walks *Zamalzaïn*'s *Cantinière*, whose duty it is from time to time to assuage his unquenchable thirst with copious draughts from her little barrel. Following these two marches a troop of *Kukulleros*, or retainers, clad in short breeches and silken shirts and armed with wooden wands garnished with bunches of bright-coloured ribbon. And in rear of them capers *Gathia*, *Zamalzaïn*'s jester, who, while duti-

fully jeering at all his master's adversaries, like Molière's *Scapin*, makes of his lord the unconscious victim of a thousand impudent *fourberies*.

### 3. *Yauna and Anderia*.

After Zamalzaïn and his suite are introduced two strongly individualized characters, typical of an undying element in the rural life of the Basque cantons. For here come *Etcheko Yauna* (or, in the French, *Jaon*), a portly Yeoman-farmer, a sort of Basque John Bull, in a wide-brimmed hat and with a long broadsword poking out from beneath his flapping coat-skirts. His right hand grasps a sturdy staff, and with his left he leads his wife, *Etcheka Anderia*, an ample dame rustling with a dignified multiplicity of petticoats. And behind them, in close attendance, trudge *Laboraria*, a typical Basque hind with a goad in one hand and a banner in the other, and his good wife *Etchekandere*, whose archetype made goat's-milk cheese in these parts before the Vandals swept southward through the passes. These symbols of the eternal race of peasant-cultivators are followed by a tumultuous rabble of landless vagabonds, the *Bouhameshak*, Bohemians or Gypsies, a rout of turbulent rapacallions with all their belongings in sacks bound round their shoulders, and in their hands an armoury of wooden swords painted terrifically with black diagonal stripes.

Two quaint and interesting figures follow these: the *Chorrotchak*, or knife-grinders—originally, so the folklorists hold, cutlers of scythes and plough-shares—who, humping their whetstones and other insignia of the tinkering trade, advance together, intoning as they walk a curious chant sung in a penetrating high falsetto. Haunting and almost pathetic in its cadence, it resembles the cry of the itinerant umbrella-menders one meets in Breton villages, and is not unlike the opening bars of *Le Bon Roi Dagobert*, one of the oldest of old French nursery-songs.

Another posse of silk-shirted *Kukulleros* brings up the rear of this bizarre procession, which, led by *Cherrero*, winds its way through the crowded *place*, making brief official halts before the *Mairie*, the church, and the *Cure's* house. And at the conclusion of these acknowledgments to constituted Authority, *Cherrero* leads the whole strength of the company in a frenzied *farandole*, up and down and in and out the square, villagers and visitors joining in, and the whole assembly winding its way in a tortuous twisting serpentine until the music stops and everyone sinks exhausted on to the ground or upon such improvised seats as may be available. Then follows a brief breathing-space, during which—as indeed throughout the whole of the proceedings—the masquers sustain consistently and without cessation the characteristics of their different parts. But the respite is of the briefest; for in a trice the indefatigable *Cherrero* advances as *Régisseur*, or Master of the revels, to initiate the performance proper of the *Mascarade*.

#### 4. *The Mummimg.*

First of all *Cherrero* announces the commencement of the set business by a long-drawn howl, intended to silence the babble of the crowd and to give the signal to the *Tchurula*, which at once strikes up an antique air, wayward and primitive in its rhythm and interval, as a sort of overture. Then, with the handle of his besom he traces in the dust a wide-stretching circle beyond whose limits dancers must not transgress nor audience venture. And into the arena thus defined immediately leap *Zamalzain* and his black companion; and, to the twanging of guitars and the shrilling of insistent flutes, the crimson knight then gives a display of his hobby-horsemanship, every movement of which is reproduced with amazing fidelity by his raven mimic, who keeps so accurate a distance behind him as to seem a veritable shadow of his lord.

The whole performance is a marvel of synchronized agility, and master and man appear as puppets whose gait and actions are governed by the same manipulator; though *Zamalzaïn* maintains throughout a consistent unconsciousness of his squire's existence.

At last their turn is over, and the red and black hobby-horsemen give place to *Yauna* and *Anderia*, who dance a 'contredanse' with *Laboraria* and his good wife; a graceful intricacy of crossings and bowings and *chassées* in which the staid dignity of the Yeoman and his dame is made to contrast with the more rustic but no less rhythmical posturings of the humbler pair. And, after them, the Jester, *Gathia*, dances with the *Cantinière*, and *Manichalak*, the blacksmith, executes a vigorous solo, clanking his anvil and flourishing his hammer. The *Kukulleros* then go through a sort of morris-dance, making great play with their be-ribboned wands; and the two knife-grinders trip a quaint measure to an old traditional tune, repeating at intervals their weird and characteristic cry. And finally, the *Bouhameshak* gypsies perform a sort of ballet of a fantastic and almost Hungarian ferocity, clashing their wooden swords, and making arches of them in certain figures that recall the sword-dances still to be seen in the Alnwick district of Northumberland.

The steps and character of all these dances are traditional, and strictly prescribed by immemorial custom and precedent, and the idiosyncrasy of each personage is maintained, not only in each individual performance, but throughout the duration of the revels. So that the gasconading bravado of *Zamalzaïn* and the mimicry of his squire, the distinctive inter-dependence of *Yaun* and his dame and *Laboraria* and his good wife, the ribald outlawry of the gypsies, the japes of *Gathia* and the intriguing isolation of the two knife-grinders with their perpetual chant, provide a framework which makes the *Mascarade* almost as integral and coherent a whole as the more

uniformly dramatic *Pastorales*. At the conclusion of the dancing displays, *Cherrero*—who, all through, has been busy introducing the characters, filling in the intervals with patter that never fails to draw its meed of laughter and applause, and feeding the general animation with a thousand improvised drolleries—steps into the circle, and raising his broom, once more gives vent to his ear-piercing howl, as a signal that the more formal part of the revels is over. At once the music changes tune, and, led again by *Cherrero*, performers and spectators mingle once more in a joyous *farandole*, with which the proceedings proper terminate.

#### 5. *Bilbao Sword-Dances, and the Aurreescu.*

Over the frontier, on the far side of the Bidassoa, the Spanish Basques delight to vary or supplement the *Mascarade* with a kind of sword-dance peculiar to the people of the iron-mining districts near Bilbao—a noteworthy instance of the survival of folk-customs even in areas blighted by modern industrialism. A score of youths clad in white shirts with scarlet *faja* sashes and waistcoats, their trousers gartered with circlets of tinkling bells, and all of them armed with the inevitable wooden swords, dance with half their number of girls dressed in short stiffly-crinolined skirts and wearing monstrous headdresses of feathers like the plumaged aureoles of red-Indian chiefs. The dances consist of a series of rhythmic evolutions and invariably commence with the elevation of the Biscayan banner, which is saluted by every dancer dropping on one knee.

But, on both sides the border, the festivities at Carnival-time are almost invariably brought to an end by the dancing of the *Aurreescu*, a country dance which is perhaps the most popular of all, as it is certainly the prettiest to watch. For all the male performers in the *Mascarade*, or sword-dance, dance in turn with a partner selected by

each from among the female mummers or the audience, and the effect of the intricate steps and turnings is heightened by the white handkerchiefs which flutter from each dancer's disengaged hand. The couples twist and turn with a marvellous grace and quickness, each pair vying jealously with its predecessors in brisk and agile gracefulness.

And so, despite the barrier of the western Pyrenees and the sundering waters of the Bidassoa, the Basques of Bayonne, Mauléon, and La Soule, attest by their common heritage of these old *Mascarades* and country-dances and of the traditional dramatic literature of the *Pastorales*, their brotherhood in blood with the *Vascongados* of Viscaya, Guipuzcoa, and Alava; a brotherhood confirmed by their common use of the same ancient and mysterious *Euskara* language as well as by a strong identity in physical type. And, though stout patriots in their respective French and Spanish nationalities, these cousins of the Cornishmen and the Kabyles of Barbary represent an undying vestige of the old Iberian stock, and a civilisation and ethnical character older and deeper-rooted than any other in Europe, which links the hectic ferment of to-day with the pristine simplicity of an immemorial past.



# OUR NEED FOR RELIGIOUS SINCERITY \*

By W. B. YEATS

## I

SOME weeks ago, a Dublin friend of mine got through the post a circular from the Christian Brothers, headed 'A Blasphemous Publication', and describing how they found 'the Christian number of a London publication in the hands of a boy'—in the hands of innocence. It contained 'a horrible insult to God . . . a Christian Carol set to music and ridiculing in blasphemous language the Holy Family'. But the Editor of a Catholic boys' paper rose to the situation; he collected petrol, roused the neighbourhood, called the schoolboys about him, probably their parents, wired for a film photographer that all might be displayed in Dublin, and having 'bought up all unsold copies . . . burned them in the public thoroughfare'. However, he first extracted the insult—the burning was to be as it were in effigy—that he might send it here and there with the appeal: 'How long are the parents of Irish children to tolerate such devilish literature coming into the country?'

## II

'The devilish literature' is an old Carol of which Dr. Hyde has given us an Irish version in his *Religious*

\* The Irish periodical, which has hitherto published my occasional comments on Irish events, explained that this essay would endanger its existence. I have therefore sought publication elsewhere.—W.B.Y.

*Songs of Connacht.* The version enclosed with the circular was taken down by Mr. Cecil Sharpe, and differs in a few unessential phrases from that in *The Oxford Book of English Ballads*.

'Then up spake Mary,  
So meek and so mild;  
Oh, gather me cherries Joseph  
For I am with child.

Then up spake Joseph,  
With his words so unkind;  
Let them gather cherries  
That brought thee with child.

Then up spake the little child,  
In his Mother's womb;  
Bow down you sweet cherry tree,  
And give my Mother some.

Then the top spray of the cherry tree,  
Bowed down to her knee;  
And now you see Joseph  
'There are cherries for me'.

The poem is a masterpiece, because something of great moment is there completely stated; and the poet who wrote the English words—it may exist in every European tongue for all I know—certainly wrote before the Reformation. It has been sung to our own day by English and Irish countrymen, but it shocks the Christian Brothers. Why?

### III

The actual miracle is not in the Bible, but all follows as a matter of course the moment you admit the Incarnation. When Joseph has uttered the doubt which the Bible also has put into his mouth, the Creator of the world, having become flesh, commands from the Virgin's

womb and his creation obeys. There is the whole mystery—God, in the indignity of human birth, all that seemed impossible, blasphemous even, to many early heretical sects and all set forth in an old ‘sing-song’ that has yet a mathematical logic. I have thought it out again and again and I can see no reason for the anger of the Christian Brothers, except that they do not believe in the Incarnation. They think they believe in it, but they do not, and its sudden presentation fills them with horror, and to hide that horror they turn upon the poem.

## IV

The only thoughts that our age carries to their logical conclusion are deductions from the materialism of the seventeenth century; they fill the newspapers, books, speeches; they are implicit in all that we do and think. The English and Irish countrymen are devout because ignorant of these thoughts; but we, till we have passed our grain through the sieve, are atheists. I do not believe in the Incarnation in the Church’s sense of that word, and I know that I do not, and yet, seeing that like most men of my kind these fifty years I desire belief, the old Carol and all similar Art delights me. But the Christian Brothers think that they believe, and suddenly confronted with the reality of their own thought cover up their eyes.

## V

Some months ago Mr. Lennox Robinson gave to a paper edited by young poets a story written in his youth. A religious young girl in the West of Ireland, her meditations stirred perhaps by her own name of Mary, begins to wonder what would happen if Christ’s Second Coming were in her own village. She thinks first that the people are so wicked they would reject him, and then that they might accept him and grow good. She is pursued by a tramp, becomes unconscious, is ravished and returns to

consciousness in ignorance of what has happened. Presently she finds herself with child and believes and persuades her parents that a miracle has taken place, and gradually the neighbours believe also and turn good. At last she dies bringing forth a girl-child; and the tramp arrives in the village knowing nothing of what has happened, gets drunk and boasts of his crime.

This story roused as much horror as the Cherry Tree Carol. Yet countless obscure mothers have so dreamed, have been so deceived; some of them born in Protestant communities have become Johanna Southcotts and lost our sympathy; but if we imagine such a mother as a simple country girl living amongst settled opinions, the theme grows emotional and philosophical. I have myself a scenario upon that theme which I shall never turn into a play because I cannot write dialect well enough, and if I were to set it where my kind of speech is possible, it would become unreal or a mere conflict of opinion. Mr. Lennox Robinson and I want to understand the Incarnation, and we think that we cannot understand any historical event till we have set it amidst new circumstance. We grew up with the story of the Bible; the Mother of God is no Catholic possession; she is a part of our imagination.

## VI

The Irish Religious Press attacked Mr. Lennox Robinson and a Catholic Ecclesiastic, and an Ecclesiastic of the Church of Ireland resigned from the Committee of the Carnegie Library, of which Mr. Lennox Robinson was secretary, because it would not censure him. I think that neither the Irish Religious Press nor those Ecclesiastics believe in the Second Coming. I do not believe in it—at least not in its Christian form—and I know that I do not believe, but they think that they do. No minds have belief who, confronted with its consequences—Johanna Southcotts, deluded peasant girls and all the

rest—find those consequences unendurable. The minds that have it grow always more abundant, more imaginative, more full of fantasy even, as its object approaches, and to deny that play of mind is to make belief itself impossible.

## VII

I have worked with Mr. Lennox Robinson for years, and there are times when I see him daily and I know that his mind plays constantly about the most profound problems; and that especially of late his Art, under the mask of our brisk Dublin comedy, has shown itself akin to that of writers who have created a vision of life Tullian would have accepted. I think of Strindberg in his *Spook Sonata*, in his *Father*, in his books of autobiography, as mad and as profound as King Lear; of James Joyce in his *Ulysses*, lying 'upon his right and left side' like Ezekiel and eating 'dung' that he may raise 'other men to a perception to the infinite'; of John Synge, lost to the 'dazzling dark' of his *Well of the Saints* and of the last act of his *Deirdre*. I cannot deny my sympathy to these austere minds though I am of that school of lyric poets that has raised the cry of Ruysbroeck though in vain: 'I must rejoice, I must rejoice with ceasing, even if the world shudder at my joy'.

## VIII

The intellect of Ireland is irreligious. I doubt if one could select from any Irish writer of the last hundred and fifty years until the present generation, a solitary sentence that might be included in a reputable anthology of religious thought. Ireland has produced but two men of religious genius: Johannes Scotus Erigena, who lived a long time ago, and Bishop Berkeley, who kept his Plato by his Bible, and Ireland has forgotten both; and its moral system being founded upon habit, not intellectual conviction, has shown of late that it cannot resist the onset of modern

life. We are quick to hate and slow to love; and we have never lacked a Press to excite the most evil passions. To some extent Ireland but shows in an acute form the European problem, and must seek a remedy where the best minds of Europe seek it—in audacity of speculation and creation. We must consider anew the foundations of existence, bring to the discussion—diplomacies and prudences put away—all relevant thought. Christianity must meet to-day not the criticism as its ecclesiastics seem to imagine of the School of Voltaire, but of that out of which Christianity itself in part arose, the School of Plato, and there is less occasion for passion.

## IX

I do not condemn those who were shocked by the naïve faith of the old Carol or by Mr. Lennox Robinson's naturalism, but I have a right to condemn those who encourage a Religious Press so discourteous as to accuse a man of Mr. Lennox Robinson's eminence of a deliberate insult to the Christian religion, and so reckless as to make that charge without examination of his previous work; and a system which has left the education of Irish children in the hands of men so ignorant that they do not recognise the most famous Carol in the English language.

# POEM

By ARCHIBALD MACLEISH

NO lamp has ever shown us where to look

Neither the promiscuous  
And every-touching moon

Either with their not much caring nor stars

Lights to sea-ward and far off nor  
Not meant for us

From darkened promontories that nor say the flash  
Goes out leaving an afterward  
Of trees no more

The whole sun nor even

No Within  
The buried staring eyes of one  
A long time dead, long drowned, there stands  
Still fixed upon impenetrable skies  
The small black circle of the sun.

# LORD CURZON THE ORATOR AND THE MAN

*By* DESMOND CHAPMAN-HUSTON

## I

LORD CURZON, from his earliest days, was a man who aroused interest and curiosity. Men might like or dislike him—and it was quite possible for the same person to do both—but they could not leave him alone. As a result much has been written about him without somehow giving any feeling of certitude that we really know the man. He was difficult to understand, perhaps even impossible, and yet, in some respects quite easy. Milton says that ‘nothing profits more than self esteem founded on just and right’, and throughout his career Lord Curzon possessed and displayed that frank recognition of his own worth which never goes with a servile mind or inferior breeding. Contrary to the vulgar belief, he was neither conceited nor self-satisfied; it was merely that he possessed in an unusual degree self-knowledge and self-respect, and of this combination the man in the street is always a little suspicious: vagueness and illusion being ever instinctively at war with clarity and realism. Curzon (he’s great enough for us to drop the prefixes which he sought so assiduously and wore with such magnificence) knew he was remarkably able; he liked high places—the higher the better—and it seemed to him quite natural, the average of his contemporaries being but mediocre, that they should without hesitation—and almost without exception—give place to him. Sometimes, having a great deal of human nature, if not a great deal of ability, they did hesitate and then there was trouble. Then



Curzon was Baroque, and almost to the very end of his career, Baroque was disliked both by the cultivated and by the crowd: an example of his sympathy with literary Rococo was a great and quite undeserved admiration for a poem like Tennyson's *Blow, Bugle, Blow!* He should have been born a hundred years earlier or thirty years later, because Baroque is once more coming into fashion! He was the great nobleman of the eighteenth century to his finger-tips, and greatness, in the decorative and spectacular sense, is disliked by modern democracies. The crowd always has and always will distrust anything that does not conform to its own drab standards.

Curzon's inherent feeling of responsibility had deep and rich foundations as history will one day show; men were over ready (they always are) to be annoyed and irritated by its outward manifestations without pausing to consider its deeper consequences. Its greatest result was that, literally from cradle to coffin, it never permitted its possessor to offer anything less than his very best: is that a little thing in these pinchbeck days? His will, an historic document of the first importance, will remain for all time to prove the truth of this submission.

I first came to know Curzon well when spending Christmas in the same country house in 1910. We had a great subject in common: India. My warm admiration for such servants of the Indian Empire as Lord Dufferin, Lord Lansdowne and Sir Mortimer Durand aroused his interest and touched, as it happened the matter that was nearest to his heart. There was also our common enthusiasm for the gracious lady known as John Oliver Hobbes. Speaking with the highest admiration of her personality as known to the world, and of her published writings, Curzon said she was one of those rare natures that reserved their very best for their friends. He told of treasuring a large correspondence which they had kept up for many years, and said that

although most of the letters were too personal and too frank for publication, they were in many respects superior to anything she had written. Yet I think it was my enthusiasm for the great Viceroys who preceded him that really won his approval; nor did he hide under a cloak of mock modesty his view that, when the records came to be set forth, his own name and work in India would stand as high as any, not even perhaps excluding Warren Hastings and Dalhousie, for both of whom he had the greatest admiration. I was in no wise fatigued by a certitude which others might have found a little cock-sure.

When I enlarged on my sense of the distinguished position Lord Dufferin, in a very crowded career, found time to achieve as a writer and an orator, he made it plain that even there he felt himself no whit behind. Yet I think on this point he was perhaps a little wrong. Dufferin had an Irish heart, a quiet human sympathy, and an ardent nature which gave his eloquence a warmth and an appeal that was, as a rule, beyond Curzon's reach. Not on strictly classical lines the fine orator that Curzon was, Dufferin could make a greater popular appeal; what Curzon once described as 'Dufferin's courtly charm' was as irresistible in public as it was in private.

This meeting in due course led to my undertaking to collect and edit a volume of Curzon's speeches. I worked at it intermittently in the early part of 1914; it was, save for the introduction by Lord Cromer and my own editorial preface, ready for the press when the War broke out in August, and I speedily forgot all about it; but, as we shall see, Curzon did not.

The volume was entitled *Subjects of the Day*, and my idea was, excluding all mere Party speeches, to compile a volume that would exhibit something of the sweep of the orator's intellect, the breadth and amplitude of his interests, the fineness and versatility of his mind. Apart from one on Home Rule and one delivered in the House

of Lords on the Finance Bill of 1909, the only speeches that might have been labelled political were the remarkable one on Lord Rosebery's motion for the reform of the House of Lords, and four on Woman Suffrage, in which he said in a manner that was final all that could be said against the proposal: I have no doubt that later, when he came to change his mind on the subject, he could have made equally fine speeches in its defence. He was unusually capable of seeing clearly both sides of a question, but he knew that to permit himself to be unnerved by doing so was to undermine his value as a practical statesman, and he was not going to be guilty of a weakness for which he could never find it in his heart to forgive George Wyndham or Lord Balfour.

It has often been said that to wade through a volume of old speeches is the most dismal of entertainments. That, as a rule, is quite true, yet I think it is not so where Curzon the author, because their marked superiority of form gives them a genuine claim to permanent interest; indeed, he was never once guilty of a speech that was improvised, hurried or slovenly. Nor did he ever speak on any subject without having first completely mastered it. This was the basic principle of his whole career. Let it be said again that he never gave to his contemporaries or the Empire, either in private or in public anything less than his best. Others might do so; Curzon could not. It was this inflexible determination to live up to his own high standard, to his own ideal of himself, that gave him an appearance of hardness, harshness and superiority which undeservedly won the jibes of lesser men. Meretricious themselves, they mistook his self-knowledge and self-mastery for self-conceit. If ever anyone literally obeyed the injunction, 'know thyself', it was Curzon; where he may sometimes have failed was in his knowledge of other men. Fully alive as he was to his own quality, he never made the fatal error of thinking that talent or

even genius can fully discharge its task without effort, and he laboured assiduously and unendingly. When he tried a man or woman and found them wanting he dropped them; it being often unfair to judge from one action only, he was sometimes wrong; yet any other course was difficult to his practical mind and unbending pride.

Something Renaissance in him loved the glitter of life; the warm radiance of Royal smiles; the high respect due to rulers and Viceroys; the magnificence of Courts and Castles; the dignity and importance of being a great and discerning patron of literature, of learning and, more especially, of architecture; the discriminating applause of important gatherings of cultivated persons—even the inevitable fatigues and boredoms of perpetual office were such as his soul loved. He knew his fitness for these things; he achieved them, but no man could truthfully say that he did not work hard for them, or that he ever desired the palm without the dust and heat.

## II

The written and spoken word: are not these, after all, the two most potent weapons of civilised man? Curzon certainly thought so, and there can be little doubt but that from his Oxford days he intended deliberately to qualify for the position of an Elder Statesman, and it is but justice to record that never at any time was he a mere Party politician. Yet the false pride of the small-minded and the second rate was never his, and he freely admitted that he could never have entered the House of Commons had he not at the beginning of his career received substantial aid from Party funds. If the Party leaders of the day considered that fact as making him amenable they soon discovered their mistake. However it may have appeared to the uninformed, he never from the beginning to the end of his career subordinated what he conceived to be his duty to any consideration whatsoever: His stalwart integrity was impregnable.

To an ambitious and able young man, but slenderly endowed with this world's goods, writing made an obvious appeal; it could win him not only a degree of early fame but some very necessary money. A Conservative in the sense that he wished always to see preserved everything good in the past, he was alive to the value of the old tradition that an English statesman should also be a man of letters.

In 1883, at the age of twenty-four, he won the Lothian Essay Prize at Oxford, and in the following year the Arnold Essay Prize. Five years later, before he was thirty, his *Russia in Central Asia* attracted considerable and well merited attention. It has been described recently by a brilliant writer as a book more admired than read. That may well be true yet, because it was good work it brought its author a lasting reputation, and books not read by the multitude have often a great and permanent value; they are absorbed by and influence those who shape thought and events. Curzon's first book is well worth reading to-day. From his Oxford days to the day of his death he wrote regularly, and in the earlier period of his career made quite a handsome addition to his income from journalism and authorship. During the last years of his life, clouded as they were with great disappointment unflinchingly borne and considerable physical pain, he found time to collect and put in more or less good order a mass of valuable material, the bulk of which will certainly one day be published.

His writings are too well known and too easily accessible to require many words here, except perhaps from one particular angle. In *Subjects of the Day* I included three of his articles which attracted considerable attention when published in *The Times*. They were tributes to George Wyndham, Alfred Lyttelton and Sir William Anson. Although written they are really eulogies or orations spoken over the bodies of the newly dead. They have

a classic restraint, a rich dignity and a noble eloquence such as few could compass; they have that rarest and most dangerous of all literary qualities—tenderness. These tributes stand at the head of their class. That such appreciations are extremely difficult to write everyone who has tried them knows only too well. Indeed, in literature, they are the supreme examples of:

‘Oh, the little more, and how much it is!

And the little less, and what worlds away!’

In the George Wyndham tribute Curzon may seem to give his subject too high a place; yet measured by promise, possibility and capacity, he was right, though practical statesmanship might not seem to justify the estimate.

Those who denied Curzon, as a man and a writer, the possession of sweetness and tenderness, must revise their judgment if they will ponder the following passage from his tribute to Alfred Lyttelton; it not only permanently enriches English literature; it is a mirror in which is revealed with shimmering beauty the very sound and sight and soul of Lyttelton:

‘All will remember his endearing manner, that seemed almost to partake of the nature of a caress, and was equally captivating to age and youth, to high and low, to women and to men. They will see again the sparkle of his merry eyes and hear the shout of his joyous laughter. They will picture once more the virile grace of his figure, loosely knit, but eloquent of sinews and muscles well attuned, his expressive gestures, and swinging gait. They will measure the quality of his mind, moderate and well balanced in its inclinations, emphatic but not censorious in his judgments. They will think on his high and unselfish character, and of his honourable and stainless life; and, as he passes into the land of silence and becomes a shadow among shadows, they will reflect with a lifelong pride that they knew and loved this glorious living thing, while he shed a light as of sunbeams and uttered a note as of the skylark in a world of mystery, half gladness and half tears’.

Does it not also reveal clearly the soul of the man who wrote it? Here is no frigid, conceited public orator

uttering a formal oration over a political colleague. The cry is from the soul, and the passage is drenched with the personal emotion of a quick brain and warm heart suffering from the intolerable pain of recent loss.

*Subjects of the Day* included four of Curzon's most important speeches on the Empire, and gave some idea of his knowledge and services. It is now doubly sad to reflect that the first and most interesting, because most personal of these, was that delivered at the dinner given to Lord Milner in May, 1906, after his return from South Africa.

The subjects on which Curzon spoke with accomplished mastery were unbelievably varied. Putting aside India, the Empire and Public Affairs as more or less the everyday business of a statesman of the foremost rank, his themes in this one volume included Eton, Old London, Birds, English Scenery, Literature and Poverty, the Houses of Great Men, Oxford, Old Masters, Universities, and Smoke—that abomination which is destroying all our great architectural possessions. How far ahead he was of his time is evidenced by his tender and eloquent appeal for birds twelve years before the Hudson Bird Sanctuary became an accomplished fact. On all these matters (and many more) he was entitled to be heard. Men who had devoted their lives to any one of them freely admitted that he touched nothing without adorning it, and that to any issue he chose he could bring a sure knowledge that was astounding. His industry was almost superhuman. He worked far into the night and early morning found him hard at his correspondence. To the very end of his life, in or out of office, he answered every letter by return and in his own hand. It was his immense knowledge which gave him his feeling of power so often mistaken for arrogance; it gave him also—and rightly so—something not unlike a contempt for those less industrious and less competent than himself, which he did not always success-

fully conceal; that is assuming that he very often tried to do so!

Of the many truly fine speeches in *Subjects of the Day*, I personally would be inclined to place highest that delivered at the Albert Hall in December, 1907, on the fiftieth anniversary of the Indian Mutiny. It is a noble piece of oratory, and ranks with the greatest oratorical utterances of the past. Addressing the small band of survivors he, with a simplicity that was Greek in its restrained beauty, said :

‘those of us in this hall who are privileged to be present are gazing for the last time upon one of the supreme pages of history, before it is turned back for ever and stored away on the dusty shelves of time’.

The peroration to this speech might well serve for one on the greater sacrifices and the darker days which were yet to come. He had recited a long list of glittering names—Lawrence, Henry and John Nicholson, Outram, Havelock, Colin Campbell and others—and after ushering them formally and with noble diction into the halls of fame he continued :

‘And together with these let us not forget the hundreds more of unknown and inconspicuous dead, who were not the less heroes because their names are not engraved on costly tablets, or because their bodies rest in unmarked Indian graves. Equally with their comrades they were the martyrs and the saviours of their country. Equally with them their monument is an Empire rescued from the brink of destruction, and their epitaph is written in the hearts of their countrymen. The Ridge at Delhi which they held against such overwhelming odds, the Residency at Lucknow which they alternately defended and stormed, the blood-soaked sands at Cawnpore—all these are by their act the sacred places of the British races. For their sake we will guard them with reverence, we dedicate them with humble pride, for they were the altar upon which the British nation offered its best and bravest in the hour of its supreme trial. . . .’

The tribute to Scott and his comrades, made as President



of the Royal Geographical Society, is worthy of the subject and the occasion: could any Englishman listen to this untouched:

‘These are the five men whom we mourn, with whose widows and families we condole, but for whose shining example their country is grateful and the world the better. May I add the expression of a personal hope that, subject to any strongly avowed wish by those who have an incontestable right to utter it, their bodies may be left where they lie, with the snow as their winding-sheet, the eternal ice as their tomb, and the solemn Antarctic wastes as the graveyard in which it has pleased God that they should sleep. Scott, in particular, could not have a more fitting resting-place than on that great frozen Barrier, whose secrets he was the first to reveal, and amid the scenes which his life and death have rendered immortal’.

The manner in which an orator prepares a speech that is, in the fullest sense of the word, successful must always be of interest. If he is to compete with the greatest he must do three things: he must profoundly move his immediate hearers; he must be good to read afterwards and he must achieve something that has form as well as substance. Few orators can do these things to an equal degree. A man may be supremely good at the first as Mr. Lloyd George, for example, is, and the result at best will be eloquence, at worst rhetoric; it will not be oratory. Like Burke, Lord Balfour is better to read afterwards than to listen to, and while he disdains anything like deliberate form, he achieves a unity all his own by the brilliance of his mind and the perfection of his logic.

Curzon, as a young man, studied Gladstone and his methods, had listened to Bright and Disraeli, and, later, had learned lessons from Chamberlain, Wyndham and many more. In strictness most noted speakers are only men of great eloquence; they are not orators because oratory implies—indeed necessitates—preparation and is higher than eloquence. Curzon desired to become supreme: he succeeded. With the exception of Lord

Rosebery and Lord Oxford it is doubtful if any of his contemporaries equalled him. Rosebery, silver-tongued and versatile, had hardly Curzon's depth, but Lord Oxford can pack more thought into fewer words than any man alive, and it is interesting to note that one of Curzon's happiest orations was the fine tribute he paid to Asquith in a speech at Balliol College in June, 1913.

Directly the War broke out Curzon set himself the task of going up and down the country addressing great gatherings of people. I was preoccupied by soldiering and had completely forgotten about *Subjects of the Day*, when I received a letter asking me when the volume was going to Press! I pointed out with some diffidence that the time seemed to me no longer opportune, and, moreover, that the title was now meaningless as there was only one 'subject of the day', and all that had gone before was as idle words. Curzon did not agree, and, as the event proved, he was right, because when the book appeared in the early part of 1915 it attracted much attention, and its high spirit, and patriotism wide and sane, served in those early hectic days to place the war in a truer perspective. I was summoned to Hackwood for a week-end, and we arranged to include one or two war speeches, thus bringing the volume up to date and justifying its title. I thereupon selected the war speech at Glasgow delivered on September 10, and the address at Harrow School on October 12, 1914.

Curzon foresaw a long war (I think he realised it even before Kitchener did); from the first he showed his devoted admiration for Belgium and her King, and he raised the whole subject of our participation in the war to the highest and noblest plane. At Glasgow, speaking of India, which, as we have seen, ever warmed him to his highest effort, he said:

'Why are these men coming? What has induced them to volunteer to take part in our fighting? They are thousands of

miles away. They cannot hear the thunder or see the smoke of the guns. Their frontiers have not been crossed, their homes are not in jeopardy. They are not of our kith and kin; no call of the blood appeals to them. Is it not clear that they are coming because the Empire means much to them, much more than mere Government or power? It speaks to them of justice, of righteousness, of mercy and of truth'.

On such occasions Curzon was at his best; he was the Elder Statesman praising those whom he knew to be worthy—and he never praised without knowledge—therefore the task was satisfyingly and convincingly done.

In a Royal Literary Fund address on 'Literature and Poverty', made in 1913, he displayed a common sense and sympathetic understanding with which the undiscerning would never have credited him; it was an echo of the early days when the fee he received for an article was a matter of real moment to him:

'I decline to admit that there is any stimulus in poverty or any inspiration in squalor. Byron was a genius although he was a peer; Burns was a genius although he was a ploughman. But Burns' genius was not due to his being a ploughman, any more than Byron's genius was due to his being a peer'.

The speech entitled 'Indian Careers and Indian Viceroys' is in reality the germ of the last task of his life, that great work on the Indian Viceroyalty which has recently been published. The idea of making this exhaustive study was in his mind for a very long time. He wanted to write an adequate and permanent record of all that service as a Viceroy meant. The following quotation from the speech delivered in 1909 might well serve as an introduction to his final literary task:

'There is no one of us who has served in India who regrets one day or one hour that he has given to it. Whatever of health or strength he may have sacrificed—and the sacrifice is sometimes not inconsiderable—it has been gladly rendered. And although, when we come back to this country, we occasionally find that nobody

quite knows where we have been, and still less what we have been doing, we feel that our experience in India, whatever it may have been, is something with which we would not part for anything else the world has to offer, that we have had our hand, so to speak, on the pulse of the universe, and have played a part, however humble, in the greatest work that can be given to human beings to perform'.

To prove conclusively that he had his full and generous allowance of the milk of human kindness it is only necessary to read the personal tribute to John Oliver Hobbes which he delivered at the unveiling of her Memorial at University College in 1911. It is the measure of a friendship never rashly bestowed but once given, firm, magnanimous and understanding, and in it the word fits the thought as the perfume fits the flower.

Although Curzon took immense pains in the preparation of his speeches he always delivered them from a few simple notes. All the headings, even the details were first carefully worked out, and as a result became familiar to his mind. He wrote and spoke with the greatest ease and never hesitated for the right word. Like the ancients I think he must have written out in full his more important passages, and, unlike them, he then destroyed them. Anyhow he held that a fine passage should be as good to read as to hear. After all, the famous funeral oration of Pericles was probably written beforehand by Thucydides from notes supplied to him by his distinguished friend.

Curzon having accumulated his facts, ordered them, and having decided what he was going to say, had no difficulty in endowing his materials with vivid and forceful life and a grave and dignified form.

Admittedly his spoken orations sometimes lacked that touch of personal warmth, which many lesser men have commanded, and which was his at will when he used his pen. It was an abiding misfortune that in the presence of others a deep-rooted pride which had in it elements of nobility, and an unconquerable shyness, made it almost

impossible for him to be at his very best. Nevertheless, amongst his contemporaries no speaker kept a higher all-round excellence, commanded richer beauty of phrase and diction, or touched with equal skill the clarion and the lute. It is true that as he spoke he did not always succeed in making you inhale the sweet perfume of Alexander's body and garments, or see the sunburn on his face and neck; but the large grave outlines, the integrities and nobilities, if not the elusive intimacies of his subject, were always truly there, and, as we have seen, when he spoke under the stress of personal emotion, he could command a sure and moving tenderness.

## III

It would be impossible to deal with Curzon the orator and writer apart from Curzon the man. It was always so. However exalted the seat he occupied, men forgot it when they came into contact with the holder; he was so much bigger than the stage on which any of his actions were set! This may sound extravagant, but it is not really so. He had that overmastering quality which cannot be hidden by any office however exalted, and which forced those with whom he dealt into the open in all their thin nakedness.

A truth that must be faced is that he was unpopular with his colleagues, and it was so because he was superior to the majority of them; he knew more than they did; his quick mind had reached the right conclusion before theirs had started fumbling on the way. They did not like this, and perhaps, glutton that he was for work and activity, he showed them small patience. He was a great Foreign Secretary. He, of course, knew Europe like the palms of his hands, and he had an intimate knowledge of places in Asia and the East of which his titular chiefs had often never even heard the name! He was born to rule as well as to govern; India was his ideal background

and he should have been Viceroy for life. His great work there was sacrificed to a man who was in the wrong as events have since clearly proved. It was so throughout his career; misfortune dogged him. His richly happy home life failed to give him the son and heir he so ardently desired. Indifferent health was his almost life-long portion. He hated inefficiency, and was compelled in public life to wink at it; he hated mediocrities, and in politics and public life he was always amongst them. The corollary to this was notable; it meant that he appreciated all excellence and ever went out of his way to praise it.

He had a right and noble ambition to be Prime Minister, and his legitimate aspiration which a cruel combination of circumstances frustrated.

He had great magnanimity as the last two years of his life magnificently proved. Denied the Premiership he was later even denied the Foreign Secretaryship. He was offered and meekly accepted the empty honour of Lord Privy Seal. He never complained or repined, and never once in a long career affording many legitimate and tempting opportunities did he retort 'I told you so'. These are not little things to record of any man: in truth Curzon was in the great succession.

We have been told that late in life he complained to an outsider and said he felt himself a cipher. To those who knew him best this does not ring true. He never complained; he could never have named himself a cypher because none knew better than he that, however it may have appeared, he never once in his life occupied that position: men always had to take Curzon into account. At the end he bowed to what he was told was best for his Country and his Party. His high sense of public duty never once deserted him.

As with all men his defects stood between him and the supreme success to which he was entitled. It is one of the unfathomable paradoxes of life that it must ever be so.

The man can always measure his own possibilities, and has the heart's bitterness of knowing how far he has fallen below them. Also he can make allowances for himself with a clarity denied to all but God. To a man like Curzon, realising how truly great were his own gifts and how comparatively trivial his imperfections, the failure of his contemporaries to give him the highest place was indeed bitter. Yet the moment he passed from the sound of human praise or blame we, seeing truly with that terrible, that sudden illumination of death, divined him in his fullness and forgave him all his faults. Already, as is the kindly way of men, we think only of his wit, his charm, his boyish abandon, his high gift of unfailing friendship and helpfulness: of his greatness and his magnificent services to the State all are now agreed. Soon everything of him but what was sweet and fair and great will pass away: his personality will no longer stand between him and his achievements. Then shall we acclaim him as one of the greatest of our sons; he will undoubtedly stand for all time amongst the first rank of British Statesmen. The restraint, dignity and magnanimity of his last years will be held in sad remembrance now that we realise that to him, as to us, life did not come with both hands full, only because it does not to any man.

# THE FINDING OF MERLIN

*By* H. J. MASSINGHAM

ONE of the stories in the Mabinogion relates how King Lludd (who gave his name to Ludgate Hill) overcame two dragons that fought one another and turned England upside down.<sup>1</sup> He stupified them with mead, shut them up in a magic cauldron and buried them in a kistvaen (or degenerate stone-tomb in a barrow) on Snowdon at a place called Dinas Emys, between Bedgelert and Capel Curig. Five centuries later, Vortigern took refuge in Snowdon and began to build a tower at Dinas Emys itself. But whatever he built in the daytime always fell down in the night. The wizards that he consulted informed him that his tower would never stand unless he could find a child without a father and sprinkle the tower with his blood. So Vortigern despatched his messengers into all parts of the kingdom, and at length they found Merlin who was a child without a father. Him Vortigern made ready to sacrifice, but the boy caused the foundations of the tower to be dug, and there they found the red and the white Dragons sleeping. The two dragons (the mead having worked off) immediately began to fight one another, and then Merlin proceeded to deliver his celebrated 'prophecies' to Vortigern concerning the defeat of the Britons by the Saxons.

This is the story told by Nennius, who wrote between the eighth and the tenth centuries, but the Chronicles of Geoffrey of Monmouth ('Histories of the Kings of Britain', written in the twelfth century) gives a fuller

<sup>1</sup> The red and the white Dragons symbolising the war between the Britons and the Saxons.



account of the same story. According to him, Merlin was found at Carmaerthen owing to a youth named Dalbutius taunting him with his bastardy.

‘At that word the messengers lifted up their faces, and looking narrowly at Merlin, asked the bystanders who he might be. They told them that none knew his father, but that his mother was the daughter of the King of Demetia, and that she lived along with the nuns in St. Peter’s Church in that same city’.

Accordingly, his mother was fetched to Vortigern and revealed the secret of her son’s parentage, a secret I shall keep to myself until the proper place for disclosing it. The rest of the narrative is as in Nennius, except that more space is devoted to the confounding of the official wizards, and that the dragons are described as sleeping in two hollow stones. Giraldus Cambrensis also gives Dinas Emys as the scene of Merlin’s prophecies to Vortigern.

Another of the Merlin stories in Geoffrey of Monmouth makes him the engineer of Stonehenge. Here, Merlin is associated not with King Vortigern but Aurelius. After his victory over the Saxons, Aurelius rebuilt the churches that had been destroyed by them. He was also moved to set up a very different type of building to commemorate the dead. Whereupon he summoned Merlin, and Merlin counselled him to fetch ‘the Dance of the Giants that is in Killaraus, a mountain in Ireland’.

‘For a structure of stones is there that none of this age could raise save his wit was strong enough to carry his art. For the stones be big, nor is there stone anywhere of more virtue, and so they be set up round this plot in a circle, even as they be now there set up, here shall they stand for ever’.

Aurelius makes merry over this proposal and Merlin answers him: ‘Laugh not so lightly, King . . . For in these stones is a mystery and a healing virtue against many ailments. Giants of old did carry them from the furthest ends of Africa, did set them up in Ireland what

time they did inhabit therein. . . .' So the Britons took an army, set sail and came to Mt. Killaraus. But though they were able to defeat the defenders of the circle, neither their wit nor their strength availed 'to fetch down the Dance'. 'And when they were all weary and spent, Merlin burst out on laughing and put together his own engines', and laid them down 'so lightly as none would believe'. So the stones were fetched over the water, those self-same blue stones which the archæologists of to-day say were brought either from Brittany or the Prescelly Mountains of Pembrokeshire, to make the circles of Stonehenge before the setting up of the great trilithons.

One could hardly find a clearer example of an attempt to put a meaning to, to make a story out of, to rationalise a mighty temple of the 'men of old that had come down without a definite history but with shreds of tradition to a people whose ways were not their ways. Aurelius, following his victory, rebuilds the churches devastated by the Saxons as a memorial of the same event, and sets up a temple of the heathen upon the counsel of an enchanter whose birth is not as other men's, who knows that they possess mysterious virtue, and who fetches them from a distance as in actuality we know that they were fetched. The archaic civilization that thought thus highly of stones (megaliths) has become attached to the wars between the Celts and the Saxons like an old beam used in the construction of a new building. How easy to distinguish that beam from the rest of the ceiling, to which it is neither essential nor appropriate.

The quest of Merlin now takes us to the fourth book of the *Morte d'Arthur*, where the distinguished necromancer falls into a dotage upon one of the damosels of the Lake, hight Nimue. She was one of those by no means unfamiliar damsels who prefer a commonplace young hero to a spell-binder of the intellectual calibre of Merlin. Also she was 'afear'd of him 'because he was a

devil's son and she could not beskift him by no means'. So to rid herself of his solicitations she induced him to enter a dolmen in Cornwall 'wrought by enchantment', and there to a *living death* she left him for ever.

From Cornwall to Marlborough will we go, as the ancient mariners, who set up the megaliths of England, went before us.

In the grounds of Marlborough College, five miles from Mount Silbury, and like it, on the banks of the Kennett, there is a huge chalk pyramid. The Roman road which diverts its course to avoid Silbury pays the same compliment to Merlin's barrow. The name of Marlborough originated in Merlin's Barrow according to Walter of Coventry (1070), to Domesday Book, to Camden's translation of Neckham's couplet in *De laudibus divinæ Sapientiæ* (1586)

'Great Merlin's Grave

The name to Marlborough in Saxon gave'.

The earliest arms of Marlborough were 'a castle argent upon a field sable', with the legend round the shield 'Ubi nunc sapientis ossa Merlini'. The sceptical reader, when he expects me to arrive at the apocalyptic finale of placing the *ossa Merlini* beneath the Marlborough mound, forgets that he has already been buried in Cornwall. There is also a tomb of Merlin in Brittany in the Forest of Brece-lande, and yet another in the Isle of Sein, where he was also immortally imprisoned. Merlin, be it remembered, was a greater magician than Arthur, who was buried in twenty different places. A scepticism may quite legitimately demur at the derivation of Marlborough from Merlin's barrow, but it entirely fails to explain why tombs, which we know to have been raised by the megalith builders,<sup>1</sup> should have been honoured as the sepulchre of that supreme enchanter's immortal remains.

<sup>1</sup> *Viz.*, the dolmens, menhirs, stone circles and other remains in stone or earth intimately allied with them.

Where now do we stand with Merlin? Wherever, like the Vice in the Old Comedie, he makes his totally irrelevant appearance upon the Celtic stage, it is dressed from head to foot in the old-fashioned clothes of the megalithic period. He is decidedly *démodé*. He begins as a destined victim of human sacrifice because he is a son without a father, a garbled reminiscence of the old solar cult. He is on such familiar terms with dragons that he can smell them out from beneath the earth, and he knows all about their water-powers. Not merely is he linked up with stone circles, but he is the architect of Stonehenge, the unique temple of Bronze Age Britain, whose magical and medicinal stones his expert knowledge of engineering causes to be fetched from another country, whether that country be France, Ireland or Wales. Again, he is a well of information about giants who originally brought the megalith-habit from Africa. Lastly, he is buried either under an earthen pyramid near the capital of archaic England (Avebury), or under a stone dolmen in the country where the long and round barrow men sought gold and copper and tin for their bronze. He is buried but he does not die, and the glorious immortality of the miner-mariners and the giant kings<sup>1</sup> has degenerated into a living death.

Always he is credited with supernatural endowments: if his was no natural birth, so his were more than mortal faculties. The complex of magico-mythical beliefs embalmed in folk-memory and handed down from the towering reputation attaching to the archaic civilisation of the megaliths and the search for magical 'givers of life', are focussed into his own proper person. Yet though

<sup>1</sup> Our 'prehistoric' remains of the 'Neolithic' and Bronze Ages are placed in the gold, lead, tin, copper and flint (the chalk Downs) regions of England. The builders of the megaliths are called giants in tradition and folk-lore, and are definitely associated with kingship and sun-worship.

he drifts into the chronicles of a later age, like a derelict galleon into an anchored fleet of comparatively modern warships, his abilities as an Arch-Medicine Man are neither random nor generalised. They are architectural, draconian and calendrical, for, as Spenser and Geoffrey testify, he was one having authority over the sun and the moon, the night and the day. In other words, he was a calendar maker, the earliest native embodiment of Old Moore's Almanac, and as such was following in the steps of Osiris of the lunar calendar and the later Pharoahs of the solar dynasties. His main preoccupations were with stone-working, agriculture (through irrigation and the watery empire of the dragon)<sup>1</sup> and the heavenly bodies, and these elements are a triangular formula for the archaic civilisation. Metallurgy is lacking, but that is the only flaw in his character. I admit it is a serious one.

Observe, too, his psychological discontinuity with the other actors in the romances and chronicles. He has no stake in the stories; cut him out and they make a distinct gain in homogeneity. He is a waif, an alien, a man born after his time and among punier men than he, a Rip van Winkle who awakes into a new world after a sleep of hundreds of years, still trailing clouds of faded glory and escorted by dreams of the past. He is a king's daughter's son, but without aristocratic much less princely rank. He is not even a salaried court-magician, but a king's councillor without a portfolio. In the grand style and with a wealth of symbolism drawn from his specialised draconian lore, he makes rapt prophesies about events that have already occurred. Evidently, he has journeyed so far upon his time-machine that his line of communications is broken, and he halts the car when he has passed the stage of phenomena concerning the coming of which he delivers so impressive an oration. Could there be

<sup>1</sup> The 'prehistoric' dragon, whom, as Prof. Elliot Smith has shown, came out of the East, was always associated with water.

testimony more manifest of the journey itself? Is it not plain that he is old wine poured into a new bottle, and that he belongs to a lineage, a society, an era more ancient than that of Iron?

The other figures in the old stories have at least a quasi-historical, a semi-realistic being, but Merlin comes from the clouds and passes across the scene still muffled in their cloak. It is now my business to try and show that he was just as historical as they were. A real man walked and breathed under the enchanted cloak, and it is by unclasping it ourselves that we shall discover who that man was. We have got him back into an older civilisation than the Celtic; the next step is the part he played in it.

Since by now the reader must be thoroughly acclimatised to an atmosphere of magic, he will bear a sudden transportation to the Pacific. In Mr. W. J. Perry's *The Children of the Sun*, we are given example after example of the Islanders' traditions, first as to the transportations of sacred stones in the founding of one settlement after another, next as to the perfectly definite association of these stones with wonderful strangers who came from the sky-world, founded their lines of chiefs and priests and taught them all their arts and crafts, and lastly as to the magical powers possessed by these 'culture-heroes'. The founders of Ponape in the Carolines, which are full of megalithic monuments, came from Yap on stones that swam in the water.<sup>1</sup> These stones were inhabited by spirits (*viz.*, the deified ancestors of the Chiefs of Ponape), who originally dropped down from the sky and turned into stones, and the gods could not be approached except through the medium of these stones, which were only to be found in certain places. If they were lacking from

<sup>1</sup> One of the stories in the Mabinogion is of a huge sarcophagus, which ten yoke of oxen could not move from its place. It was conveyed across the sea at the bidding of a Saint, and reached the opposite shore without crew, pilot or captain.

them, so was the cult of the gods. The stones possessed medicinal properties and other magical powers. So in Melanesia, sacred stones were petrified sky-beings. Opoa in Raiatea was the Avebury-cum-Silbury<sup>1</sup> of Polynesia, the most sacred *maræ* or pyramid-temple in all the Polynesian group. Thence stones were taken to other islands, where other *maræ* were set up. Throughout Polynesia, in fact, the sacred stones were 'derived from pre-existing settlements'. Lastly, in Indonesia, the founders of new villages took stones with them from their original homes, and thus from island to island preserved a continuity of specific culture and religious observance.

Thus sky-beings, the distribution of settlements and magical properties are inseparable from the wanderings of sacred stones, and it is a fact worthy the attention of the theorists as to the spontaneous and independent origins of cultures that these stones invariably settled down in the neighbourhood of pearl and pearl-shell beds, gold mines and other metalliferous regions. The sower from the sky-world went forth to sow, but he did not drop his stones by the wayside, and it is by his calculated movements, the uniformity of his actions, and the clues left upon his trail that we can decipher whence he came from, whither he went and what was the object of his travels.

The magical strangers in the Pacific were, in fact, the pioneers of civilisation in the East, and from their unparagoned achievements and the magical beliefs and practises diffused by them arose the folk-tales and traditions of their supernatural powers. Thus the Philippine Islanders relate how the ancestors of their chiefs possessed special powers over nature; they could transport themselves from one place to another before you could say the Tinguian equivalent for Jack Robinson; they could create men out of betel nuts, control the weather and the heavenly bodies,

<sup>1</sup> Silbury is the huge pyramidal mound of chalk three-quarters of a mile from the great temple of Avebury, near Marlborough.

wither people they did not like, and were in various other aspects most accomplished graduates in the *literæ humaniores* of sorcery and enchantment. These skiey magicians formed, indeed, an International Board of Thaumaturgy, for in Egypt, India, Polynesia and North America, they were endowed with almost exactly identical powers. They—

‘by words could call out of the sky  
Both Sunne and Moone,

Huge hostes of men they could alone dismay,  
And hostes of men of meanest things could frame’.

(*Spencer on Merlin.*)

Their functions were creative (they animated stones and men), architectural, draconian (they are very frequently association with ‘water-monsters’) and calendrical. They were mainly concerned with stone-working, agriculture and the heavenly bodies, and through them all with ‘givers of life’, with, that is to say, the metals which possessed the power (see Elliot Smith) of conferring immortality. In one labour-saving word, they were the Merlins of the East, and we can after all heal the flaw in Merlin’s character, since through stones, dragons and his own life-giving powers, he was, though indirectly, a spright of metallurgy.

But who were these strolling magicians? The answer is a life-giving one in itself: they were sons without a father. Lasæo, the stranger-lord of the Celebean Toradja, Lumawig of the Philippine Bontoc, Oro of Raiatea, Tane of the Maories, Tangaroa of Mangaia, Sa Tagaloa of Samoa, Zamna of Yucatan, Dravidian Karna<sup>1</sup>: these and many others with less mellifluous names were sons without a father, because their male parent was the Sun. They were the ancestor-gods of the peoples whose ruling houses they founded, the stone-heroes, the metal-hunters, the

<sup>1</sup> The son of the Sun by a royal maiden. MAHABHARATA.



seekers after the gift of life, the Children of the Sun, the sowers that sowed the seeds of civilisation on stony ground, the makers of rain and sunshine like the kings of Egypt, the masters of magic, the kings with their cultural merchandise, the ancient mariners of the Pacific whose oars broke the silence of the furthest seas. It might be urged that in burning the fires of mythical prowess from these heroes, one had reduced them to ashes. But surely in measuring them down to reality, we have heightened their romance. Pure myth is tedious because it is too far removed from human experience, and gods are a poor substitute for men as trees walking.

And now what has Geoffrey of Monmouth to say about the illegitimacy of Merlin? When his mother, the King's daughter, was brought from her nunnery before Vortigern, he enquired of her 'Who was the father of the lad?' 'One thing only I know', replied the lady, 'that one appeared unto me in the shape of a right comely youth, and embracing me full straitly in his arms did kiss me, and after that he had abided with me some little time did so suddenly vanish away that nought more did I see of him'. Amazed at her words, the king commanded that Maugantius should be called unto him, and when he had heard the story, he said unto Vortigern: 'In the books of our wise men and in many histories have I found that many men have been born into the world in this wise. For . . . certain spirits there be betwixt the moon and the earth, the which we do call incubus demons. These have a nature that doth partake both of men and angels, and whensoever they will they do take upon them the shape of men and do hold converse with mortal women'.

Merlin, in short, was one of the Children of the Sun. To understand the full purport of this derivation, I would ask the reader to recollect the recent research works which has shown that the rise of the Children of the Sun to power followed upon the inspiration of the priests of

Heliopolis in actualising the vague conception that the Pharaohs were gathered to their father, Osiris, after death. The new idea was that the Pharaoh was born of Rê, the Sun God, by a virgin of royal birth, and the dissemination of this idea corresponded with a profound political revolution. Henceforth the kings of the ancient East were the sons of the Sun. Belus and the Tyrian Hercules (Baal and Moloch)<sup>1</sup> were of this lineage, and I maintain that it was their descendants who introduced the full sun-cult to Western Europe. The reason why I have sought the Pacific for parallels to Merlin is because there is no evidence of any carriage of civilisation antecedent to them, and no confusion in consequence between the Neolithic and the Bronze Ages.

But in England, the Children of the Sun were not first but second in the field. England had been already colonised during the Neolithic period, and Avebury, Silbury, the Long Barrows and the dolmens (the construction of which outlasted the Avebury period into the early part of the Bronze Age) with the mining of flint, copper, gold, tin and lead they represented, were the consequence of this colonisation. The Children of the Sun arrived in England, I believe, from Spain or Brittany, to extend the mining and agricultural enterprises of their predecessors. The evidence appears to me to be clear that Merlin<sup>2</sup> was one of these early Bronze Age

<sup>1</sup> Derived from Mellkarth, the 'King of the city'.

<sup>2</sup> Alfred Nutt, in *The Revue Celtique*, has shown that Ængus, the magician of the Irish Tuatha de Danann, was another of the boys without a father. Ængus is another name for Mac Oc, who was one of the Irish Fir-Bolg, whom Prof. Rhys, the once Professor of Celtic at Oxford, calls the pre-Celtic colonists of Ireland—and so the megalith-builders of New Grange, etc. The Fir-Bolgs were Kings of a kingdom under the sea and in the Triads Merlin is called the 'Divine and Immortal One of the Stronghold of the Sea'. Prof. Rhys says that Mac Oc was not only the Irish Merlin but 'an original god of the sun'. Gastea, in a paper published in

Sun-Kings of Britain, that his memory survived into the late Bronze and Iron Ages of the Celts, and was finally chrystallised in the monkish chronicles. But, absorbing as the interest of him in these records is, we have not yet exhausted it. It is remarkable how faithfully they reproduce the details of the Sun-paternity myths. Though it appears only a minor incident, the nunnery portion of the narrative is one of the surest clues of identification. The story of Danæ in her tower, visited by the Sun-God in a shower of gold, is an obvious parallel; the Incas of Peru (who had the sun-cult and the divine theogamy) shut up their daughters in convents right up to the arrival of Pizarro, while analogies from other parts of the world are abundant.

But there is one very significant difference between the Oriental and the English accounts of the parentage of the Children of the Sun. The father of Merlin is no longer the Sun-God but an incubus demon, a supernatural being of a status between men and angels. A clearer case of degeneration could hardly be found, and the incubus demon is plainly another version of the giants who really were degenerate Gods. 'There were giants in the earth in those days: and also after that when the sonnes of God came in unto the daughters of men and they bare children unto them; the same became mightie men, which were of old, men of renowne.' Lastly, we can link up these inferences with the fact that when the Celts began to move westward, the Sun-God, as among other warrior nomads, had disappeared and been amalgamated with his lineal descendant, the war god. The heathen Celts possessed innumerable relics of solar ritual in their religion, but they were not authentic sun-worshippers.

The one remaining difficulty seems to me to be Merlin's sovereignty of Bronze Age England. It is possible that *Folk-lore*, Vol. XVI, has cited numerous oriental parallels to the story of the tower and the boy without a father.

he was one of the purely foreign Children of the Sun? But I think that he is just sufficiently anchored to Geoffrey's account of the Celts in England to grant him a place on the Downs with them, though not of their company. I 'think', yes, but the reader will want something better than that. Here it is. In the First Welsh Triad, we read that Britain's first name was Clas Myrttin, or Merlin's Close. Thus can we restore a son to his father and a king to his kingdom.

# MUSIC

## MUSICIANS AND PHILOSOPHERS

MUSICIANS and philosophers generally find some difficulty in understanding one another. A musician is apt to think that a philosopher is talking nonsense when he attempts to fit music into his system along with the other arts; and a philosopher is often driven to the conclusion that musicians are difficult if not impossible to deal with. If he asks about Beethoven, for instance, the reply will probably be that Beethoven's music is exceptional and difficult to discuss; if he brings forward Debussy or Stravinsky, the musician's answer will be expressed in terms which (to a philosopher) are unintelligible.

'If, says Sig. Liuzzi,<sup>1</sup> you want to knock a musician flat, confront him with a problem of musical æsthetics. . . . Nine times out of ten, when you bring him to the point, the poor man will be covered with confusion, and with good reason. Either he will feel as defenceless as a tortoise without its shell, or else he will rely on some little point which looks like logic, but really is of no more use than a sword made of tin; or, again, he will be armed with some catchword which he will flourish in vain against the nets of your argument. At last he will leave you with his nose in the air to meditate on one of the following positions (which will vary according to the camp to which he happens to belong): either (1) that it is useless to talk about musical æsthetics, because the only thing that can reason about music and be infallibly right is the heart; or, (2) that you, good man, have no business to discuss the question; on the contrary you are absolutely incapable of understanding the aims and tendencies of musicians who are new, young and rebellious—you, who are a reactionary, an academic person, and even a professor; in any case you are a sentimental and pedantic bourgeois whose critical inquiries show that you know nothing whatever about it'.

<sup>1</sup> *Estetica della Musica*. Florence. 'La Voce'. 1924. 13.50 lire.

The philosopher, in fact, comes off no better than the experimental psychologist. The investigator plays a few simple chords on the pianoforte, hoping that the musician will say that they sound 'green' or 'pathetic'; and the musician will reply that they are 'six-fours' or 'diminished sevenths' in such and such a key. The difficulty is that the philosopher and psychologist speak in one language, and the musician in another. He is confused and puzzled when he hears musical things expressed in terms of the other arts.

Music is not unlike Mathematics. It has a recognised set of symbols and technical terms, which are used, not to mystify the uninitiated, but as a short cut to express clearly and directly what otherwise can only be expressed in a roundabout way. And the musician, like the mathematician, has a test which he can apply to philosophical or æsthetic writings about his art: he translates them into musical terms, and then sees whether they hold good. He realises, of course, that his symbols are not Music, any more than mathematical formulæ are Mathematics. They are a precise means of expression of musical or mathematical ideas—of the ideas which the philosophers are trying to get at in another way.

Here then are two philosophical writers, a Spaniard and an Italian; let us see how they approach the problems of contemporary music. D. José Ortega y Gasset<sup>1</sup> set himself to define with the greatest possible clarity the difference of style between the new music and the old. The problem (he admits) was strictly an æsthetic one—rhythmical, a musician might say; or a case of ears becoming sharper, to hear higher harmonics or to take a new delight in the peculiar qualities of tone of wind-instruments. Yet Sr. Ortega found that the shortest way to the solution

<sup>1</sup> *El Espectador*, Vol. III. *Musicalia*. Madrid; Calpe, 1921. 5 ptas. *La Deshumanización del Arte*. Madrid; 'Revista de Occidente', 1925. 5 ptas.

started from a sociological phenomenon—the unpopularity of contemporary music. A minority is favourable, while the great majority is hostile; those who understand are few compared with those who do not. The new art is not for everybody, as (he claims) it was in romantic times. It is intended for a specially gifted minority (Beethoven's supporters said the same in 1806); hence the irritation which it arouses in the rest.

‘Accustomed to predominate in everything, the mass feels offended in its “rights of man” by the new art, which is an art of privilege, of nobility of nerves, of instinctive aristocracy. . . . For a century and a half the people, the masses, have claimed to be the whole of society. The music of Stravinsky and the plays of Pirandello have been efficacious, sociologically, in obliging it to recognise itself for what it is’.

Sr. Ortega deliberately leaves aside ‘the equivocal fauna of the snobs’; but his position will seem (in England, at any rate) not unlike that of this equivocal fauna, which always pretends to be on the side of new music, whether it appreciates it or not. There are a few leaders, certainly, who really do understand; but there are many others who pretend to like it merely because that is the *chic* thing to do. If the general public has its ‘rights’, the few who discriminate have their ‘obligations’. One of these was W. Denis Browne, a leader of men as well as of musicians, who in 1914 (before the beginning of the war, from which he never came back) read a paper to the Musical Association in which he said everything worth saying which has since been said about the new music, from Debussy to Schönberg, Stravinsky and Bartók.

After the war, the self-styled ‘apostles’ who were ‘fighting’ for the new music had less worthy motives. There were by that time political and commercial reasons for supporting Stravinsky, *Les Six*, and the kind of music which was supposed to have received the hall-mark of Paris; and the Paris of the snobs (which has little to do

with the Paris we all admire) frightened away many musicians in all countries, who might otherwise have been sympathetic. In England the apostles of the new music were mainly publishers' hacks, with a business interest in French music. It is curious that none of them have ever been seen at the Salzburg, Prague or Venice festivals of the International Society for Contemporary Music, where the new music can be heard under the best possible conditions. But the interests of the apostles were purely commercial, and they had no use for music made east of the Rhine. It is apt to be forgotten that 'the fight for new music' has been going on in all ages, even in the immediate, romantic past. In an age given over to the virtuosity *plus* religiosity of Liszt and the virtuosity *plus* ethics of Wagner—an age which (as a musical historian has expressed it) 'proclaimed the dogma of the Immaculate Conception and invented the harmonium to sing its praises'—it was no inconsiderable achievement to gain a hearing for the music of an austere rationalist like Brahms.

Sr. Ortega, one feels, has not been altogether well advised in his choice of contemporary music. His book contains some brilliant things; but his musical experiences seem to have been confined to Debussy and Stravinsky, with a passing reference to Ravel. Neither Schönberg nor Bartók, Malipiero nor Casella, nor even his own countryman, Falla, are so much as mentioned. The theory of 'dehumanization', however, is interesting and ingenious; and will appeal to musicians, for they, at any rate will see that the same thing has happened before, in the world of music of three hundred years ago; indeed the history of Western music might be described as a series of oscillations between 'humanization' and 'dehumanization'. The theory is difficult to put into a few words, but it amounts to this: that music has been getting rid of the human, pathetic, realistic element; that it is a game, and



nothing more; that it is essentially ironical, and that, according to some, neither it nor any kind of art has any importance whatever.

‘Melodrama—(he has already said that the most pure form of melodrama is the waxwork figure), melodrama reached its most complete realisation in Wagner. . . . But already in Wagner the human voice ceased to be the protagonist and was submerged in the cosmic vociferation of the other instruments. An even more radical change was coming. It was necessary to extirpate from music all private sentiments, to purify it in “an exemplary objectivation”. This was the accomplishment of Debussy. Since his time it has been possible to listen to music with serenity, without excitement and without tears. . . . This conversion of the subjective to the objective is of such great importance, that before it all other differences disappear. Debussy dehumanized music; and, for that, the art of the new era dates from him’.

Listening to Debussy, in fact, taught some people that it was possible to listen to music as music without thinking of other things. In spite of the pictorial titles given to most of his pieces, the hearer thinks nothing about pagodas, gardens in the rain, steeples through the leaves, a darkened cathedral or the hills of Anacapri; the attention becomes fixed on the music, and on the actual sounds being made. (Can this be said, though, of one of the loveliest and most musical of Debussy’s works, the *Soirée dans Grenade*?) People accustomed to hear, or rather half-hear, what they had half-heard before, found their ears sharpened by having to listen to the ambiguous effects of the whole-tone scale, to ‘telescoped’ chords, and short cuts at the cadences. Dehumanization, however, has happened to music before—in one of Sr. Ortega’s own countrymen, the greatest of Spanish composers, Tomás Luis de Victoria, who died in 1611. He made his name in Rome, for the expressive realism of his music; he set the Latin, liturgical words, with as much conviction

as if they had been his native language—a technical feat, which he learnt from the madrigalists. Then, when he was about sixty, he changed his style, and began to write church music for large numbers of voices, arranged in several choirs and treated symphonically, with purely expressive passages in the older manner introduced here and there for contrast. So the whole effect is not the expression of the words, but a marvellous volume of sound, in which the words are little more than syllables for the voices to sing.

What makes Sr. Ortega's book interesting is that a good deal of what he says is capable of being thought of in musical terms. The conversion of the subjective into the objective, for instance, might be illustrated by the conversion of a nineteenth-century common-place like the 'diminished seventh' (with all its associations) into the ambiguous major sevenths of Stravinsky. More light, however, is thrown on the difference between subjective and objective, and other analogous questions, by Sig. Liuzzi, who has the advantage of being a musician as well as a philosopher; and knows the technical musical equivalents for æsthetic and philosophical concepts. He has another advantage over Sr. Ortega—that of geographical position; for while the Spanish writer seems to see music entirely through French eyes, the other has his own Italian point of view, and can look on both sides of the Rhine with equanimity. His essay on *Musica latina e musica tedesca*, though written in war-time, is a fine example of impartiality, when compared with the chauvinistic abuse of 'enemy' music published in some other belligerent countries. The most interesting essay in the book, however, is that in which he examines a thesis of Casella. That gifted modern Italian composer had written to the effect that

'The evolution of music in the last decades has been dominated above all by . . . the advent of a fourth element

of sound, which has added to the three classical elements of rhythm, melody and harmony. This is *timbre*, otherwise known as tone-colour'.

The argument is too long to quote here.

'It was clever (says Sig. Liuzzi), and came near to persuading me; but even while I admired it, gradually, in my mind I was pulling it to pieces. On the one side was sympathy; but on the other, logic'.

And again:

'As to what Casella calls "metaphysical relations of music with consciousness", or "crude, voluptuous sonorities", they are in reality anything but that. They are sensory perceptions which do not get beyond an ambiguous region . . . and reach neither consciousness nor cognition (*nè coscienza nè conoscenza*), and with them the truly metaphysical relation between music and consciousness'. . . .

Melody, harmony and rhythm (he goes on),

'exist as musical entities in virtue of particular demands of the spirit in which they have their origin and their existence. The same may be said of timbre. . . . In the majority of cases the perception of timbre is certainly not purely qualitative—that is, the perception of timbre does not react æsthetically as a pure quality of sound, but draws its efficacy from intuitive associations which nowadays have become habitual'.

The whole of this essay deserves to be reprinted in English, and other studies in the book are no less interesting, particularly that on E. T. A. Hoffmann; while if anything could be added to the essay, *Musica latina e musica tedesca*, already mentioned, it is the fundamental observation that Italians regard music primarily as singing, Germans as playing on an instrument.

Yet music, when all is said and done, can hardly be written about without employing its own symbols: musical notes and technical terms. The philosophers, the students of æsthetics, the painters and others, have had their say on Debussy and Stravinsky. If we want to see what the

musician has to say—if we want to know exactly what Debussy and Stravinsky, Schönberg and Bartók have done for music, we shall find it in a little book by Mr. George Dyson.<sup>1</sup> It is a demonstration of what has been happening lately in music, expressed in musical terms—the only satisfactory way in which the change can be expressed.

J. B. TREND

<sup>1</sup> *The New Music*. Oxford University Press. 1924. 8s. 6d.

# THE THEATRE

LONDON has had, and is still continuing to receive, a sort of Manna fall of good plays. It is true that *The Doll's House*, though a long run for Ibsen, is not running now; nor *The Seagull* nor *Ivanoff* nor *Uncle Vanya*, but *Henry VIII* is still with us and the Shaw season at the Regent, and I believe *Uncle Vanya* is going to the Duke of Yorks.

Besides plays we must by next quarter turn our serious attention to the Sunday Film Society, which for those who care for films is certainly going to bring wonderful results. Mrs. Geoffrey Whitworth through the Three Hundred Club is producing Flecker's other play, *Don Juan*; and Mr. Novello presents for a run at Wyndham's Theatre the soul-stirring but low-brow *Benvenuto Cellini*. I suppose we could never claim a young man with such a profile for any of the plays which deal chiefly with the mind—his physical qualities are too obvious.

There have been some appallingly bad plays produced on Shaftesbury Avenue. As it is our 'Broadway' I think that we should say 'on'.

At the Haymarket *Mary Rose* has returned to us having been put away in lavender for only a few years, and apparently the actors have been put away in lavender too, for no amount of New York has taken away Miss Fay Compton's spiritualness, the spirit that is in Blake's drawings which she unconsciously imitates—I say unconsciously because I asked her once if she had these pictures in her mind, but she had not—it is merely that she is the type of woman that he drew, the false classical face and the hair on fire and the rather ample curves and sloping fall of shoulders.

What a very fine play it is, only those who do not know it is by Barrie will realise. Those who sit airing their

foregone conclusions and saying 'Ah, that is so like him', are irritating and wrong. The theme is so great which he evolved that he has risen to much greater greatness to write of it. Much as I should love to tell the perfect story of the plot, I must not, for a revival is not a legitimate play to criticise until it is a classic, but after all to say that *Mary Rose* is a classic is only to anticipate by a year or two.

*Androcles* and *Blanco Posnet* became classics the day they were written. For some reason or other Mr. Shaw's plays have this effect on his public. Mr. Esme Percy, who both acts the great parts and produces these plays for Macdonald, has a Herculean evening. First to grunt and sweat under the heavy life of *Blanco Posnet*, the scorn, irony, foul-mouthed oaths and sentimental sneers of that one, and then to sink and weaken into *Androcles*, the gentle and Christlike!

*Blanco Posnet* is marvellously produced, and illusion is created not by a few goat-leggings and cowboy hats and red shirts from Clarkson or elsewhere, but by the steaming do-nothing atmosphere of those on the edge of great forests and lost fortunes which he has grafted into his actors. They look as though they were panting for any sordid little crime to give them an excuse for enthusiasm for oaths and pistol shots. The part of the harlot, played by Valerie Taylor, was beautifully brought out; she never sentimentalised or cast her eyes up like bad Raphaels, but remained the hardened and good-hearted professional to the end. It is strange to think that less than twenty years ago, this play as it now stands was refused a licence by the Lord Chamberlain when it was ready to be produced by Sir Herbert Tree. The Committee on the Censorship of Plays was the result. Mr. Shaw refused to omit one 'damn' from the text and the play was withheld from production.

There is a mad movement on foot for the transference of the power of censorship of plays to the London County

Council—this danger was foreseen by the great actor-managers at the time as a much greater evil. The L.C.C. could stop a play at will as they turn off the Company's water, and being a large body of men there would be no single heart or head to appeal to. Most of us think that the present censorship is about right. If, for instance, *Desire Under the Elms*, by Eugene O'Neil, were as great a play as *Hamlet*, or even a much less great play than *Hamlet*, but still great, the Censor would very likely withdraw his ban. The Americans must of course hail and uphold Eugene O'Neil, their one national dramatist, but there is no occasion for us to do the same. I went to the performance of *Beyond the Horizon*, done by the Fellowship Players at the Regent Theatre, and though there were great moments in the play, the moments are for what is past and old—'Only through suffering can one achieve happiness', say the two principal characters, and this is their constant theme. We have realised this so often and so long ago that we need not make it a subject for plays. But here we are up against it, for how can we find a new subject for plays? a new thesis, a new cliché even? The only way is to forget all that is gone and begin as if we were in a different kind of world, different kind of animals with different kind of instincts. I wish that Mr. James Joyce or Miss Virginia Wolff or the Sitwells en masse would give us a play—they have only to sit down and write '*Act I—Scene I—a terrace at Scarborough*' or '*Act I—Scene I—a dark passage leading out of the Park*'. They would be off and nothing could stop them! No one who has seen stage performances and can *write*, need fear that he cannot write a play.

I might be thought to be wavering from my task of criticism or sickening of it, but there are no new plays worthy of the name so the rest of my article must deal quickly with *Androcles*, *Henry VIII* and *Uncle Vanya*.

*Androcles*, as a play for children, is one of the best I

have ever seen; pictorially it has all the elements of *Alice in Wonderland*, *Edward Lear's Rhymes*, *The Water Babies*, and Hilaire Belloc. As a play for grown-ups perhaps the conclusions are a little cloudy, I mean in the 'trailing clouds of glory' sense for Bernard Shaw who always knows exactly what he is talking about.

Shaw suffers hardly at all by cheap production or inexperienced actors or actresses; his plays stand on their own, and could be given by a band of school children on the village green if they had an intelligent master or mistress to push them through it.

I do not say that *Androcles* at the Regent is cheaply put on. Though not played by the wonderful cast which Barker gave it originally, it has been well treated by Mr. Esme Percy. I think he himself plays more subtly than Mr. Heggie into the hands of the Lion (who was the original Lion and rather perhaps Edwardian at that, though magnificently funny).

Miss Valerie Cooper was very gentle in her part as the Christian, who shows her human weakness by susceptibility to the pagan captain's good looks. There is one place when Shaw is more or less caught up and beaten by a nobility, which he fains to ridicule, which, however, he goes 'all out' for in St. Joan.

*The Captain:* 'Are you then going to die for nothing?'

*Lavinia:* 'Yes: that is the wonderful thing. It is since all the stories and dreams have gone that I have now no doubt at all that I must die for something greater than dreams or stories'.

*The Captain:* 'But what for?'

*Lavinia:* 'I don't know. If it were for anything small enough to know, it would be too small to die for. I think I'm going to die for God. Nothing else is real enough to die for'.

*The Captain:* 'What is God?'

*Lavinia:* 'When we know that, Captain, we shall be gods ourselves'.



The Gladiator, except in physique, lacks strength—it was played once by an amazing fanatical actor, who, I am afraid, died mad, which is exactly what that Christian Gladiator would have done. The Emperor was perhaps the weak spot in that delightful part played once by Leon Quartermaine. One great fault about the post-war theatre is the disbanding of troupes.

That Barker troupe was a good troupe; actors are better in companies. We have, for instance, the example of the Moscow Art Theatre, the Abbey Theatre, the Chauve Souris (now spoilt by repetition), the Sicilian Actors, long ago, and the Guitrys themselves—these are troupes that should never disband. I spoke last time of the perfection of Mrs. Cheney's troupe of actors for the type of work they are doing: modern high comedy, they could not be bettered, and how one wishes they could keep together, at that table long for instance, which we see in the last act.

Too much has already been said about the wave of commercialism that is sweeping over the theatre, but it certainly does break up flocks, the lesser ones for want of money go to the provinces and the fittest because they insist on having money to go to Australia, where really they are finally buried. Cannot the Australians find actors of their own? They found Melba.

One wanders into the Empire, a blue ticket clasped in one's hand, slowly, disinterestedly, to one's dark box. There is no expectancy, no alarm—Shakespeare is always himself—does one perhaps feel there is going to be a very long speech by Buckingham, and if I remember rightly there is a *longueur* between two lords in the Second Act? Well yes, perhaps, but it is nothing to the *longueur* of the young man and the leggy young lady in some modern banalities. One's boredom with Shakespeare is the right kind of boredom, that which one gets on a sunny afternoon when one watches patterns made between the leaves.

Well, the curtain at the Empire before a packed house. Two Holbein noblemen plot for a moment and you are taken away into the perfect satisfaction of a history book, inaccurate perhaps, but with exquisite pictures. Sybil Thorndyke with a waxen, ivory, saintliness, already enshrined, holds your wandering modern soul as in a vice—you can never see anything but her through the play, except as a background. This may upset the balance as the great figure should perhaps be Wolsey, but there can be no right and wrong on the stage, that is the beauty of it. In one production of the same play the highest light beats upon Wolsey, in another on Anne Boleyn or Henry, in this one upon Katherine—we are equally satisfied.

Miss Thorndyke has given us a fine, quiet production on a low tone, sounding the bass notes, not the scarlet and pink and orange, the high stomached revelry of the production at His Majesty's, but why repeat? Both make excellent memories.

Of Tchekov's *Uncle Vanya*, so well known to us all, I will only recall the perfectly restrained, educated and really deeply interested acting of Miss Jean Forbes-Robertson, who has wisely decided to make her career as much as possible in this kind of play. We all have the book on our shelves so that I will deny myself from recalling the whole performance at the Barnes Theatre, but I should like to write down for my own satisfaction the miracle of those curtains in all the three acts.

Act I . . .

*Voitski* (following her): 'Let me speak to you of my love, do not drive me away, and this alone will be my greatest happiness'.

*Helena*: 'Ah! This is agony!'

Telegin strikes the strings of his guitar and

plays a polka. Mme. Voitskaya writes something on the leaves of her pamphlet.

The curtain falls.

ACT II . . .

*Helena:* 'If he says I may, then I shall play a little, Go, Sonia, and ask him'.

*Sonia:* 'Very well'.

She goes over. The *Watchman's* rattle is heard in the garden.

*Helena:* 'It is long since I have heard music. And now, I shall sit and play, and weep like a fool'. (Speaking out of the window) 'Is that you rattling out there, Ephim?'

*Voice of the Watchman:* 'It is I'.

*Helena:* 'Don't make such a noise. Your master is ill'.

*Voice of the Watchman:* 'I am going away this minute'.

*Sonia* (comes back): 'He says, no'.

The curtain falls.

ACT III . . .

*Sonia* (she speaks in a weary voice): 'We shall rest'.

Telegin plays softly on the guitar.

*Sonia:* 'We shall rest. We shall hear the angels. We shall see heaven shining like a jewel. We shall see all evil and all our pain sink away in the great compassion that shall enfold the world. Our life will be as peaceful and tender and sweet as a caress. I have faith; I have faith'. (She wipes away her tears.) 'My poor, poor Uncle Vanya, you are crying!' (Weeping.) 'You have never known what happiness was, but wait, Uncle Vanya, wait! We shall rest'. (She embraces him.) 'We shall rest'. (The *Watchman's* rattle is heard in the garden; Telegin plays softly; Mme. Voitskaya writes something on the margin of her pamphlet; Marina knits her stocking). 'We shall rest'.

The curtain slowly falls.

VIOLET RAY

# MADRID CHRONICLE

IF, as Pascal said, there is a century for the swarthy and another for the fair, it may also be affirmed, in reference to a more thankless subject than that treated by the great mystic, that in all countries there is an age for prose-writers and another for poets; and, in Spain, the present age is undoubtedly passing through the sign of the lyric. The majority of those of the generation of to-day who may be called young, that is to say: writers of thirty years of age, more or less, is made up of poets. There is no need to add that this is, of course, the majority of a minority; and, by the word minority, I do not mean to insinuate that those who form this Pleiad are few in number, but that here, as everywhere else, many are called, but few are chosen; and it is precisely these *happy few* that I propose to discuss. In doing so, I shall not talk of what is being talked about, but of what should be talked about; in brief, of what is talked about in the select circles that an English reader of *The New Criterion* would frequent in Spain.

Moreover, by a happy circumstance, there have been reports in the newspapers that, by giving more publicity than is usual to the subject of poetry, have recently caused the general interest in it to overflow its customary banks, and to reach even those peaceful persons who from the side were wont to watch, with an inattentive gaze, the passing of the lyric stream; and I cannot yet say whether this flood will fertilise them, or whether it will have no other consequence than that of a calamitous inundation. The facts are as follows: one of the few literary prizes that are granted in Spain, and the only one given by the State, has been distributed since its recent foundation with a rare, although relative, tact. Perhaps because of the careful and unusual selection of the members of the

jury, these have been making their awards to writers who would never have aspired in other countries to an official prize: to young poets and novelists representing the modern tendency; and, although this approach towards the young seems to me a good thing in itself; on the other hand, the scarcely veiled effort of the latter, in order to make themselves acceptable to the jury, to approach it in their turn, in an itch to adapt themselves to its benevolent, well-disposed, but, in general, a trifle out-of-date, criteria, does not seem to me a good thing.

It is at this precise point that two young poets have each received prizes this year from the hands of their elders; two of those young poets whom the great public looks upon as wild and extravagant, and who from now on appear to us—the great public and ourselves—crowned with the laurel, which will cause some to admire and others to mistrust them. The laureates are: Gerardo Diego, for his book, *Versos Humanos*, and Rafael Alberti, for *Marinero in tierra*. What is the present position of these poets? In a special number which the German review, *Der Querschnitt*, devoted to Spain, I was enabled to offer to the consideration of its readers a picture of our young poets in the form of a scale or ladder that ran upwards, from the deepest note to the highest and lightest tone, in the following order: Pedro Salinas, Jorge Guillén, Dámaso Alonso, Juan Chabás, Gerardo Diego, Federico Lorca and Rafael Alberti. Reduced necessarily to seven, there were left out of the scale poets like Antonio Espina, who should not be forgotten, although his irony marks him off from the lyric poets, and temperaments like that of José Bergamin, who are essentially poetical although they write in prose; and so many others too, who being poets both in matter and form are omitted, though not forgotten, owing to the limitation of the number.

We may therefore accept this picture with the sole reminder that the balance on the poetical side is much

heavier than on the prose side, because in this generation, as in all others, it happens that the poets are likewise masters of prose style; for it is well-known that in all times and countries it has not been the particular privilege of prose-writers as such to give the lead in the *manner* of writing prose, but of those who, compelled by a strictly precise thought, have needed and found its perfect expression: poets, philosophers, scientists, etc.

It is evident that in our country the young generation follows with the liveliest interest the chops and changes of the literary culture of the day in other lands. Nevertheless, none of its members in particular, and still less the generation as a whole, appears to be tainted with the cosmopolitanism which is so prevalent nowadays. The landscape is imposed on the Spanish poet—in a poetical projection, of course—and he always appears to be incorporated in it. It is not possible to obtain a good portrait of him if you try to cut him off from his background. The bird in the branches still remains the image of nearly every Spanish poet: in the branches, or better, if you like, in the telegraph wires, where his inspiration risks itself. The traveller who arrives in literary Spain nowadays, and, putting his head out of the window, allows his gaze to rest on the line of telegraph poles, would see in the wires, in the order and graduations of the scale mentioned above, the names of our poets. But the sky would not appear uniform to him as in the back sheet of a stage scene. Each poet, on the contrary, has a background and landscape special to himself. The Spanish lyric poet, however technical and objective he may be, continues to be a follower of nature, compelled thereto by the force of his surroundings and the inevitable tradition. The present masters of poetry are so: Juan Ramón Jiménez, the chief lyric poet of Spain, and leader and driving spirit of the younger generation, maintains, in spite of his conscious and intelligent purification of his style, a vivid

contact with his local and popular Andalusian source; Antonio Machado has the dark and bitter sobriety of the Castilian soil, and, in another, intermediate generation, are: Moreno Villa, who, in a way, both unites and separates the two generations, old and young, with that intermediate coloration that is neither night nor day; Ramón Gomez de la Serna, who, though he does not write verses, brings as his contribution the authentic Madrilene metaphor; and another, more on the border-line, Alonso Quesada, who, as the head of a group of island poets, has a strong overseas accent.

The position of the laureate, Gerardo Diego, in relation to other poets has already been indicated. Let us now define his position in relation to himself. He is a young professor who until recently united the practice and interpretation of the classics with a proper fervour for creationist poetry built up of bold images, entirely musical harmonies and metaphors in liberty: pure and arbitrary creation, in fine. It might be said that his left hand, while practising under such rules, remained ignorant of what his other hand, the official hand, did. However, since his book, *Soria*, and now with *Versos Humanos*, Diego also uses the classical and rhetorical moulds, and certainly not with the same touch. I prefer to his 'humane' manner, which seems somewhat spectral and false to me, his old modern manner, which squares perfectly with the formula of 'dishumanisation' applied to modern art by Ortega y Gasset. In my judgment, the classical tendency may lead to a similar collapse to that suffered in France with his *Plain Chant* by Cocteau. Rhetoric, with all its insidious dangers, leads into an ambush, and it must be recognised that, if the modern tendency with its incoherencies and obscurities may lead to a purely decorative poetry, the rhetorical tendency may loose itself in a vainly ornamental versification. The baroque-twisted column must not be confused with the abundant foliage

winding round it and adorning it, which without the column would have no support.

Despite their affection for the classics, Salinas, Guillén and Alonso maintain a greater intensity in their new verses, which, being more synthetic and solid, are at the same time more difficult and arduous, yet they hold together as though wrought with the firmness and mastery of fine labour.

In recording this, I would reproach Rafael Alberti, the other laureate, with his gay facility. Alberti is in fact the youngest and most notorious of our poets. His first book was an immediate and triumphant success, like the call of a trumpet in space. He trilled forth, clear and jubilant, from the topmost bough, but did not perhaps observe that you can stop on the topmost bough only on condition that you do not weigh too heavily upon it. A lyric poet should not indeed be heavy, but every man should give and receive a certain minimum of gravity. For my part, I do not confuse gravity with misanthropy. My melancholies are not unsatisfied desires, but are on the contrary remorseful. But this open eagerness to please that offers an eternally smiling appearance in a laughing landscape vexes and irritates me in the end. The loveliest landscape is that which fits our *état d'âme*, and the conventional undulations are lacking in that indispensable preliminary seriousness which is the basis of all gaiety. Before an ardent Andalusian background, with its sea and polished sky, the fresh song of Rafael Alberti is, in one word, the trill of a bird that suddenly breaks into song. It leaves us marvelling, provided that it is not carried on too long. For the modern man, a bird singing in the boughs is somewhat stupid as a singer. Without pretending that we should kill the moonlight, I am nevertheless concerned to denounce the striving after effects of light. A very good poet, contemporary with my grandfather, once asked himself whether a bird did indeed sing, laugh and weep. The question is a little



disconcerting; but it does not stagger me. If the bird laughs, we must agree that it is in no way correct to laugh so noisily, forgetting doubtless that there is always a good reason for keeping silent. And, if it weeps, it weeps with so much scandal that it appears to be trading on its anguish to attract attention. In neither case, is it a very creditable thing to do.

ANTONIO MARICHALAR

# BOOKS OF THE QUARTER

*In Retreat.* By Herbert Read. (Hogarth Press). 3s. 6d. net.

Those who have attempted to convey any real war experience, sincerely, unsentimentally, avoiding ready-made attitudes (pseudo-heroic or pacifist or quasi-humorous), must have felt the torturing sense of something incommunicable. Herbert Read has felt this and hints at it by putting a quotation from Conrad at the head of *In Retreat*. At this distance of time a distinct effort is needed to relate the experience to one's own life; how then can it be communicated to those who never endured it? For the first day or two on leave one would make serious efforts at communicating with the other sort of human being. Sometimes the efforts almost seemed to be meeting with success, there was quite a sympathetic atmosphere. Then some extraordinary and irrelevant question-assertion—‘But surely *our* men are *much* braver than the Germans?’—would shatter it. It wasn't a question of anyone's being brave; it was a question of trying to communicate the incommunicable. There was no ratio between the two races of men—those, I mean, in the line and those who had never touched it. I say ‘touched’ because it was so physically penetrating.

Herbert Read's *In Retreat* is the only English book I have seen which does succeed in communicating a section of real experience. Some of the French war diaries do the same thing. One can always be certain of the genuine war book because it always sets up the same kind of half-emotional, half-physical response, almost too vague to describe—the feeling of a completely non-feminine activity, the curious smells of tear gas, stuffy dugouts and bursting shells, the sensation of wandering about in mud at night and living in a desert which was over-populated and perilous, and all sorts of odds and ends of memories from the taste of petrol in the tea to the burning of Cambrai. But this sort of impressionism is hopelessly ineffective, looks (and probably is) sentimental. Read's is the only way.

‘I still feel some bitterness’, he says, ‘that so little that is effectual should have been recorded of the reality; and most bitter, perhaps,

at certain states of forgetfulness in the minds of non-combatants. But I have nothing to say—no desire to say anything—on that aspect of the turn of events’.

But what could be said? And surely Read must see how unspeakably difficult it is to ‘record the reality’, even if he is too modest to realise that *In Retreat* almost achieves the impossible. It does record the reality, and not to the literary-minded person alone. I tested *In Retreat* by lending it to a soldier who hates books; he stole my copy. The great success of *In Retreat* lies in the fact that it is apparently quite unemotional. During these intense experiences the disturbance of emotion is not present; but always in looking back on them the mind becomes flooded with retrospective and falsifying emotion, the emotion of a spectator. Read has succeeded in killing all these factitious emotions, and puts one back in direct contact with the sensations arising out of the experience. Here is a definite example. It is quite impossible to run through a barrage or even under heavy rifle and machine-gun fire; the heart beats too rapidly, the legs are unaccountably weary, the equipment weighs a ton. It is probably fear, but one isn’t conscious of fear. Except for the concentration of mind on the objective, nothing is felt but sensations. Afterwards one remembers all sorts of emotions one ought to have had, and in writing it is almost impossible to avoid confusing these after-emotions with the experience. Read imagines back the experience:

‘It seemed to take a long time to race across those few hundred yards. My heart beat nervously, and I felt infinitely weary. The bullets hissed about me, and I thought: then this is the moment of death. But I had no emotions’.

That is perfect; it is the sensation. There is really no difference between attacking or retiring under heavy fire—the experience is exactly the same. The difficulty is to record it with such consummate art.

The narrative throughout is written without any attempt to ‘raise the style’; it is quiet and level, like an inspired report to H.Q. It has all the truth that was lacking to those beautifully fanciful reports of trench patrols we used to compile for consumption by a romantic divisional staff.

Read was apparently adjutant of an infantry battalion. On the 20th of March, 1918, he was billeted in the village of Fluquières,

some miles from St. Quentin and a long way behind the front line. The Germans attacked at dawn on the 21st, and Read went to battalion headquarters at Roupy on receipt of the code for: 'Man Battle Stations'. Nothing but mist, intense gunfire and a few shells were observed until nearly eleven; no messages came from the front line. At eleven 'a gun-team galloped madly down the main road. Then two stragglers . . . were brought to headquarters'. Then came a wounded, incoherent officer with several men, mostly wounded. At that moment a false alarm of 'Boches on the top of dug-out' was given. At 1 p.m. the left front company of the battalion was attacked and beat off the enemy. This company was attacked again at 4.30; at 5.10 was still holding out; at 6.30 had lost at least two platoons, and the company commander with 25 men was in the redoubt. The counter-attack company was then ordered forward, but the movement was a complete failure and this company was nearly wiped out. The battalion was reduced to about 200 men.

During the night another counter-attack by the reserve battalion was also a failure, but about 200 men of this battalion remained in the redoubt and keeps. The enemy re-attacked in mass formation about 7 a.m. on the 22nd, and again about noon. Shortly before this, the colonel was wounded and Read took command of the battalion. The noon attack was beaten off by Lewis gun and rifle fire, though the actions jammed with the heat of firing. Some time before this, the battalion on the right had withdrawn and the English artillery had accurately fired on our own men. At 4 p.m. the enemy carried out an encircling movement and Brigade sent 'a rhetorical appeal to hold on to the last man'.

An hour later the position became untenable and Read ordered a retirement to a prepared position some hundreds of yards in the rear. The battalion suffered heavily in this retirement, and it was found that the prepared position was only a few inches deep and held no reinforcements. It was therefore necessary to retreat to Fluquières, where they found a major and some London troops. The remaining Lewis gun was directed down the Fluquières-Roupy road. About dusk low-flying aeroplanes and heavy shelling indicated a renewal of the attack. Read 'now began to be amazed at the advancing contact lights. They did not merely stretch in a line in front of us: they encircled us like a horseshoe, the points of which

seemed (and actually were) miles behind us'. The battalion in fact now held the post of honour in the retreat, it was probably the last of the rear-guard of the retiring fifth army, though it did not know this.

Read now retired to the other end of Fluquières, where he received an order from a despatch-rider, ordering all troops east of the Aubigny defences to retire through Ham.

The battalion had now been in almost continuous action for about thirty-six hours. At Ham they were ordered to proceed to Muille Vilette, which they reached in a state of complete exhaustion. At 4 a.m. on the 23rd they were roused and marched to Golancourt, where Read at last found the brigadier:

'The brigadier came into the room and seemed very pleased to see me: apparently he was very satisfied with our conduct, and especially with the frequent reports I had sent back. Till then I had felt only weariness and bafflement—even shame. But now I began to see that we were implicated in something immense—something beyond personal feelings and efforts'.

They then marched to Freniches and were ordered to defend Esmery-Hallon about four miles due north. On taking up position, Read found on his right a major of the Inniskillings with about 150 men. His left was in the air. A batman and some others found red wine and biscuits in the village.

'So S. and I each took a wine glass, and starting at different points, we began to go a round of the men. Each man lay curled in his narrow pit, resting. To each we gave a glass of wine and a few biscuits. They took it thankfully. There was a lull in the distant fighting. . . .'

No attack was made on their positions that night, which was very cold and heavily wet with dew. At 8 a.m. on the 24th troops were observed retreating in front. At 9 the enemy attacked on the left and was repulsed. At 9.30, the troops on the right retired. At 10 the battalion was heavily shelled with shrapnel by the British artillery and was forced to abandon a good position under heavy machine-gun fire, which resulted in some confusion:

'We scuttled through gardens and over walls. By the time we reached the quarry we had recovered our sang-froid. We extended and faced the enemy, who were advancing skilfully over the plain on our left. We on our part were a scrap lot composed of various

units. We hastily reorganised into sections. Retreat was inevitable. Then followed a magnificent effort of discipline. A major took charge of the situation, and we began to retire with covering fire, section by section, in perfect alternation'.

At the Nesle-Noyon canal, Read became separated from most of his men and spent a weary night on the canal bank, aching but sleepless. Once more they were successfully holding up the enemy (at dawn of the 25th) with rifle and Lewis-gun fire, and once more the efficient British artillery drove them out of their positions—all, that is, who were not killed by the excellently manufactured shells. They left Ramecourt and retreated in the direction of Solente, having now marched off Read's map. After another day's fighting and retreating they went by a stragglers' road to Roye, and the next day marched to Hangest-en-Santerre where they found the battalion cooks and were sent to rejoin their brigade at Folies. Read, who had been continuously marching and in action for five days and nights without sleep, was ordered down to the waggon lines. On the 29th they were rejoined by the rest of the battalion and set off down the valley of the Somme.

'When evening came and the hills of Moreuil were faint in the twilight, we were still travelling along the western road. No guns nor any clamour of war could be heard; a great silence filled the cup of misty hills. My weary horse drooped her head as she ambled along, and I, too, was sorrowful. To our north-east lay the squat towers of Amiens, a city in whose defence we had endured hardships until flesh had been defeated, and the brave heart broken. My mind held a vague wonder for her fate—a wonder devoid of hope. I could not believe in the avail of any effort. Then I listened to the rumbling cart, and the quiet voices of the men about me. The first stars were out when we reached Guignemicourt, and there we billeted for the night. In this manner we marched by easy stages down the valley of the Somme, halting finally at Salenelle, a village near Valéry, and there we rested four days'.

That is all.

RICHARD ALDINGTON

*Héloïse and Abélard.* By George Moore. (Heinemann). 1 os. 6d. net.

The habit of taking up an attitude to a writer that is only a reaction from the attitude of his admirers or his critics is generally, one admits, rather wisely deprecated. Shakespeare's admirers include the most vulgar intelligences in England, Germany and America, yet his greatness is recognised even by those who are most dubious about his fitness for the supreme position to which it pleased the nineteenth century to call him. And the discriminating admirer of Malherbe knows that, for what these qualities are worth, Ronsard has grace and charm, though the enthusiastic sentimentalists who break into 'Mignonne allons voir si la rose', or assure one that 'Le temps s'en va, le temps s'en va' on no provocation at all might almost be reckoned an excuse for denying the fact. Mr. George Moore has a style that one hears praised most frequently by people with journalistic minds. But that, by the rule, is not a good enough reason for assuming that he is an indifferent writer. And one has felt inclined to give him credit for making a stand against the positive apotheosis of Mr. Hardy that has been allowed to come about. Mr. Hardy, though his expression and his mind are countrified, is sometimes an artist. Too frequently, however, he has descended to suburban, artistically worthless trivialities like 'Any little old song will do for me', a type of verse that merely gives an excuse to Mr. Haydn Wood or Mr. W. H. Squire for an exercise in musical recomposition to be sung at Chappell Ballad Concerts on Saturday afternoons and National Sunday League Concerts on Sunday evenings. Yet the verse was quoted with approval in half the serious literary reviews of London. Mr. Moore has done something towards stopping that rot, but the perusal of even one of his own books makes one realise that his attack must have been more in the nature of a sensitive journalist's reaction from the attitude of his less intelligent confrères than the impatience of the literary artist with something that pretended to be literature and was not.

For Mr. Moore's style is the style of a journalist. On the very first page of *Héloïse and Abélard* one finds the sentence: 'Philippe was a physician of no small repute!' And why does he on the same page use the word 'so' for 'therefore' when it obscures the meaning? Probably because he is a frivolous conversationalist as much as a serious writer. The ordinary journalist's business is to

make himself aware of and pass on information about significant happenings of general interest. The literary journalist makes himself aware of and passes on information as to happenings, changes of fashion, etc., in the literary world. Mr. Moore is a very good literary journalist. He claims to have brought the first news from Paris about Laforgue. He renounced his allegiance to Flaubert about the time that M. Cocteau decided that Flaubert's style was not comparable to Balzac's. He was the first who openly attacked Mr. Hardy's enormous prestige amongst the vulgar. This journalistic instinct, which at the least implies very great pre-occupation with those who produce literature, may not be inconsistent with the actual achievement of literature—the word 'literature' connoting of course something that is only perceptible in association with ideas and images, and like all unsubstantial things, undefinable except in some such terms as those used by Paul Valéry when he speaks of beauty as something which puts man 'au dessus de sa nature', which makes him transcend, in the hackneyed phrase, surpass, himself.

I do not think, however, that Mr. Moore's work ever transcends Mr. Moore, or that it takes his readers outside of themselves. I am sure that if it does the latter it does not take them past Mr. Moore, who of all modern writers, not excluding Anatole France, is the most insistently and irritatingly present to his readers. When Mr. Hardy writes: 'To persons standing alone on a hill during a clear midnight such as this the roll of the world eastward is almost a palpable movement', one may resent the misuse of the word 'palpable' yet recognise that the author has put himself 'au dessus de sa nature'. And that he succeeds in communicating his exaltation to the reader. In the incident of the smashing of the chandelier in *Ulysses*, Mr. Joyce does the thing as flawlessly as it has been done in the whole range of modern prose. But Mr. Moore, who, in his own slightly sickening language, is ready always to shed the last drop of his blood to defend art, never gets outside himself, never sheds an atom of his egotism to find himself an artist. He is always there, describing and reporting—'But in eleven hundred and seventeen it (snow) lay on the frozen ground, deepening every hour, day after day, filling the roadway and the roofs, whitening the tops of the towers, bearing down the branches of the trees', it is more detailed description than a war correspondent's introductory paragraph to an



account of a mid-winter battle, but artistically it is of no greater importance. And in the remainder of the passage—‘a wonderful sight truly is a city seen through the white flutter, falling relentlessly, falling always, as if the sky sought to bury the world’, the fancy of the sky burying the world tends to lose its effect amidst so much that is merely falling and fluttering, and fails to create even a fanciful shudder.

It may be that it would be more just, no doubt it would be more polite, to label Mr. Moore a storyteller rather than a journalist. The storyteller, the *shanachie* as he is called in Mr. Moore's country, retails stories which generally are not his own inventions, and of which his verbal treatment amounts to no more than a little journalistic working up here and there. They remain objective, untransmuted. The transmutation takes place, if at all, in the telling. It is due to histrionic not literary art. Possibly when Mr. Moore called one of his books *A Storyteller's Holiday*, he wished it to be understood that he knew the truth about himself. Certainly all this dead material about Paul and Christ and Héloïse and Abélard and the waitress-waiter in Morrison's Hotel needs galvanising of some kind. It is not easily read to oneself. There is as little psychological interest in it as literary. Mr. Moore does try to recreate the characters as well as to tell us the news of them, but the effort is not successful. We get Abélard lecturing and Abélard confounding an opponent, and either is as unexciting as Canon Fulbert discoursing of roast goose to his cook. As for Abélard, the lover, he proves to be, though only thirty-eight, a middle-aged epicure in the matter of feminine contours. ‘He began to dream of the perfect shapes he would one day find under her nightgown’. Her kiss was ‘An innocent kiss in spite of its sting, he said, for Nature spoke through her lips, and with, he reflected, a very delightful accent’. And with, he reflected, a very delightful accent. And very nice too. She must ‘a’ been a nice bit o’ stuff. The language of the private soldier is the less vulgar. If we are all voluptuaries together, at least we are other things as well, and it is the business of the intelligent man to know where voluptuousness ends and æsthetic begins, and the artist's business to know how to turn voluptuousness as well as everything else into æsthetic. Mr. Moore is certainly not an artist in this matter, and there is a whole world between *Héloïse and Abélard* and a work of art like *Ulysses*,

where obscenity is so stark that it rouses ultimately only the tragic emotions, pity as when in the last chapter it regrets the good days when it was guileless and almost unashamed, terror as when it gibbers in the night-town scene.

As for the character of Héloïse, it is almost entirely unrealised. Whether the present generation believe that 'Love is best', one does not know. What one does know is that no writer of any merit to-day treats it sentimentally. Mr. Lawrence, who is the only Englishman of importance writing fiction, is exasperated by it. We live in an exasperated world, and its exasperation is in some part due to the fact that it cannot justify faith in love to itself, any more than faith in faith or faith in hope. It doubts the present and the future as well as the past. In Mr. Galsworthy's *The Dark Flower*, love as the end of existence collapsed finally in bathos. When, therefore, in a novel written during the last few years, the heroine who is supposed to be remarkable for her lively intelligence, accepts unquestioningly the idea 'that greater than the gift of vision was Virgil's revelation of human love, love of woman for man, and man for woman', one realises that the writer, as a writer, is dead. We also meet the great Suger in these pages, but only momentarily, and he is not made even momentarily interesting. The Canon's housekeeper is a stock figure—Juliet's nurse, *rechauffée*. The Canon himself is better, a mean little creature who drinks and sends hirelings to castrate Abélard, partly out of revenge for the seduction of his niece, partly out of personal dislike. But why, after denouncing Abélard as a notoriously 'free liver', did he invite him to live in the house as tutor to a young and beautiful girl without once reverting to the thought of his libertinage? His avarice would scarcely prevent him at least from thinking about it.

For the rest Mr. Moore tells his story with plenty of data, which, no doubt, are locally and chronologically accurate enough. And no doubt, too, the story will be read with interest by people who care for such data, cunningly if not artistically mixed with a little scandal. Amateurs of architecture may like the short description of the Romanesque Notre Dame that preceded the present edifice; those who know Paris or have travelled in Brittany may find themselves able to place some of the scenes; amateurs of Ireland will find an unfamiliar Irish folk-tale; amateurs of scandal will find many a tale about priests and nuns that with a little working up

might be made diverting at the club. In short there is something in the book for almost everybody except the lover of good literature.

L. ST. SENAN

*Behaviorism.* By John B. Watson. (Kegan Paul). 12s. 6d. net.

Behaviorism has not hitherto enjoyed so much success over here as in America. This may be because our interest in systematic psychology is comparatively undeveloped; or it may be because we are more familiar with materialist doctrines and therefore less easily shocked and stimulated by them. Although Watson himself is a good writer—he has force and clarity always, and, in this popular account of his system, liveliness as well; three enviable qualities—he does not please our academic minds, and his followers for the most part can only grind out the automatic springless undetachable type of sentence which is becoming an ever more wearisome affliction to those who court the sciences. For these reasons few English readers have more than a vague idea about Behaviorism—the idea that it is all tiresome nonsense perhaps—or are aware what a tide has been flowing in American thought in the last few years. The vogue of Behaviorism is certainly something to set against the antics of the Fundamentalists. It is much to be hoped that this very vigorous and candid book will be widely read. Its crudities are so evident that they do not matter.

Like some other philosophies Behaviorism contains a valuable part, and a part—the philosophical, more precisely, the ontological part—which will have to be discarded. The doctrine can be summed up briefly in two statements: (1) That psychology deals only with what can be observed. (2) That ‘consciousness’ is a meaningless term. It is worth while to consider each of these statements closely.

When the behaviorist speaks of *observation* he means something which can be done by a photographic film or a spring balance just as well as by a human being. What is observed is one event, the observation of it is another; and what happens is merely that the observed event under suitable conditions is accompanied or followed shortly after by the observing event. Thus an observation is simply a causal sequence, and any event succeeding and varying with another might, on a behaviorist account, be said to observe it. But the

particular observations with which the behaviorist is concerned are events in people, in human observers, which follow other events in other people or in themselves. Now it would appear at first sight that events in people and in ourselves could be divided into two kinds: those which are conscious, or are accompanied by consciousness—as when we hear a noise, have a tooth out, are frightened, lift a heavy weight or deliberately choose between actions; and those which are not conscious, not accompanied by consciousness—as when by a series of muscular contractions we pass food through the stomach, balance ourselves, dilate the pupil, or perform a habitual involuntary gesture. This difference which has nearly always been considered very striking, unmistakable, and fundamental, is denied by strict behaviorists. And this denial is the novel point in their doctrine.

The grounds for it are simple, as simple as the denial itself. If we observe some one else, Watson points out, the only difference that we can detect between what he would claim as a conscious event in him and another which is unconscious, is that the activities in his muscles and glands and the happenings in his nervous system which accompany them are different in the two cases. *We* never observe any of this consciousness he speaks of; all we observe is changes in his behavior, including the vocal movements by which he speaks of it to us, and if he observes us *he* will never observe any consciousness in us. This is very true and the contrary view has never been held. But Watson concludes that consciousness is 'a plain assumption just as unprovable, just as unapproachable, as the old concept of the soul' (*Behaviorism*, p. 5).

Compare now the case in which we observe ourselves. Let us stand before a mirror and, not to choose too violent an experiment, let us gently tweak a tuft of hair. No more than before do we observe any consciousness in the movements which we see, either in the tweaks or in the facial contractions which may follow if they grow more vigorous. None the less, another series of changes is certainly taking place. Each tension of the skin is accompanied by these changes, as is each movement of the arm, and about these changes we are even more sure than about our actual movements. The problem, however, is whether these changes are known through *observation*, in the sense defined above.

If they are, we must admit that we do not yet know which events

by varying with which others, are 'observing' them. It is possible that conscious events only become conscious through causing other events which thus observe them—just as Watson's reactions observe an infant's reactions to a mouse—but by an inner observation. We do not yet know enough about the working of the brain to be certain that this does not happen. Yet it seems improbable that consciousness is a matter of observation in this sense. Conscious events certainly observe other events and are observed by them, *i.e.* they have causes and effects, but it must be doubted whether this character of being observed has anything to do with their consciousness, or whether consciousness, itself, if we allow ourselves for a moment to speak of it apart from the event to which it belongs, can be said to be observed.

The first half of Behaviorism then, the contention that psychology deals only with what can be observed, excludes consciousness from its field of study, for we clearly cannot yet systematically observe it in this sense. And the behaviorists are left with a perfectly definite field for research, namely the observable responses which different situations excite and the history and interconnections of these situations and responses. Much valuable work is being done by them in this field. We shall consider some of their results later.

But the other half of Behaviorism is less successful. Fortunately it is much less important. That consciousness is a meaningless term, that it 'is neither a definable nor a usable concept; that it is merely another word for the "soul" of more ancient times' (*Behaviorism*, p. 3), and that it is a pure assumption—all this does not follow from its non-observable nature. We may not observe consciousness, but we have it or are it (in some as yet undetermined sense), and in fact many of our observations of other things require it. In this respect the point of view of the behaviorist is hardly so much a point of view as a mistake.

Yet this denial is plainly not due merely to a blunder; it springs from much more interesting sources. There is, in fact, something very unsatisfactory about introspection as a scientific method. It often produces conflicting evidence which is difficult to criticise, and it requires a technique which is not strictly analogous to the other techniques of science. In physics or in physiology any able man can be trained to be a moderately good investigator, and any failings he may have (inaccuracy or clumsiness, for example) are easily

detected. But in introspection the causes of discrepancies and the kind of training required to produce improvement are still very uncertain. Probably our psychological theories always exert disturbing influences. Thus men impatient of the slow task of clarifying problems, who like to see their work clear ahead of them in the form of definite questions to be answered by a definite technique, readily tend to despise introspection. This impatience rather than bad arguments is responsible for the negative side of Behaviorism. There is also the feeling that any adding in of 'conscious' factors which cannot be measured and do not obey the same laws as the rest of nature must play havoc with all hopes of satisfactory explanations; and this feeling is justified. An essentially physiological explanation ought not to be eked out by scraps of experience. It should remain physiology. But this is not—and here the Behaviorists made their mistake—the same thing as saying that there can be no study of consciousness or that the study may not provide valuable indications in working out a physiological theory of behaviour. In point of fact, it constantly so serves.

What is valid in the doctrine is the insistence upon external observation of behavior, as an indispensable method in psychology. But this is hardly an innovation. The more novel point is the demand that this behavior should be conceived in terms of itself and that we should exclude from our interpretations of it any but a limited number of physiological ideas. This self-imposed limitation need not be, but is, commonly confused by the behaviorist with the quite different point of the occurrence of consciousness. It is one thing to say: 'Let us try to describe and explain all human behavior entirely in terms of interaction between stimulus-situation and response', and quite another to say, 'Let us try to persuade people that they have no consciousness'. The first is of real value, and likely, if it can be carried rather further, to change our views on many points, and possibly to bring out the rôle of consciousness in a new light. The second is merely waste of time.

The methods and conceptions so far developed by Behaviorism in its legitimate aspect are extremely simple. They derive very largely from Pavlov's conditioned reflex methods. If we sound a note just before feeding a dog we shall find after a number of repetitions that the note alone without any food causes a flow of saliva in him. This is known as 'conditioning'. We have sub-

stituted the note for the food as the stimulus to the salivation reflex. But in man reflexes often become conditioned after only one occurrence. And the situations in which human behavior takes place consist of uncountable numbers of different stimuli. Moreover, man's adjustment involves multitudes of responses, and the problem of strictly tracing out the process by which response depends upon situation is overwhelmingly complex. Even in Pavlov's laboratory, when the dog, a simpler animal, is shielded during the experiment in every possible way—sitting on a table in a dark sound-proof room entirely separated from the experimenter who sees him only through a periscope and gives him the stimuli and measures his responses by indirect electrical means—it is still often difficult to get trustworthy results; a fly, for example, which was fluttering in a corner of the dark chamber quite away from the dog was found on one occasion to be upsetting the whole experiment. When the experimenter is not separated from the dog, accidents in his manner quite beyond his control play a hopelessly disturbing part in producing the responses obtained.

It is not very surprising, then, that the experiments of behaviorists with human beings in a more or less ordinary mixed environment should seem in comparison crude and their results doubtful. The conditions are a little better with infants, and it is here that the best work has been done. It was work which very badly needed doing, since the behavior of the very young has been for fairly obvious reasons much neglected.

One of Watson's most interesting observation is that the peculiar and recognisable response which is ordinarily known as fear—'a jump, a start, a respiratory pause followed by more rapid breathing with marked vasomotor changes' (changes in the blood flow, *e.g.* growing pale), sudden closure of the eye, clutching of hands, puckering of lips—is only elicited in 'new-borns' by two kinds of stimuli, loud noises, and being suddenly left without support. But as is well known, a normal three-year-old shows fear for a great number of other things. Here is a representative list from Watson: Darkness, and all rabbits, rats, dogs, fish, frogs, insects, and mechanical animal toys. Watson's thesis is that all these fears arise because at some time the appearance of a dog, for example, has coincided with either a loud noise or being knocked over (loss of support). The dog later, when it merely approaches, causes the fear, just as the note

caused Pavlov's dog's mouth to water. This fear then gets transferred to other situations which the infant groups with it, and so on. Thus Albert B., eleven months old, who had an (experimentally) conditioned fear of a white rat, showed fear five days later of a rabbit, a dog, a fur coat, cotton wool, but not of bricks (*Behaviorism*, p. 128). Evidently this view has no use for 'instincts' except in the sense of initial characteristic responses to characteristic situations. But these, as Watson points out, are shown by a boomerang, which when properly thrown behaves quite unlike an ordinary stick. The child is a very complicated kind of boomerang, and its instincts merely the result of its structure at birth.

Now this, it will be realised, is, if it is correct, an extremely important contribution. Watson finds in children who have not been emotionally conditioned no such fears of dogs or darkness, and if this is established, a prospect of a comparatively fearless humanity is opened up if only we can manage our nurseries aright. There is, however, the possibility that maturation may introduce complications. Even though loud noises and loss of support be the only stimuli which cause fear immediately after birth, it may be the case that later on, quite apart from conditioning, other stimuli come to have the same effect merely through the infant's growth. Maturation certainly plays some part, and some very definite responses only appear at a very late age. The specific sexual responses appearing with adolescence are an obvious instance.

The exact truth in this matter will only be discovered by further experimental research, and Watson is undoubtedly to be congratulated for the part he has played in furthering such experimentation. He has come to consider that the unlearned (unconditioned) beginnings of emotional reactions are three in number. Fear, elicited as above, Rage, elicited by hampering of bodily movements, and Love, elicited by stroking of the skin, tickling, gentle rocking, and patting. Love responses include 'those popularly called "affectionate", "good-natured", "kindly" . . . as well as the responses we see in adults between the sexes. They all have a common origin' (*Behaviorism*, p. 123).

Watson further points out that since the same object (say a parent) may in one situation become a conditioned stimulus for fear, in another for rage and in another for love, these three original groups of responses can easily become complicated through experience.



Only, he does not use the word 'experience'. To do so would be to link his labours up with those of more traditional psychologists. His extremely provoking attitude towards academic psychologists and towards psycho-analysts alike, amusing and inspiring though it is when we realise that his work is likely to be of great assistance to them and is not in conflict with theirs, is to be regretted if it debars them, as it may, from taking due notice and advantage of it. They have already shown too often the natural tendency to reply in kind. It may be suggested that these very different views and methods are not irreconcilable. Nothing so readily gives a beginner in psychology a sense of helplessness and annoyance as the existence of violently opposed views which he more often than not suspects to be mere verbal variants. And indeed Watson's 'boomerang' analogy shows that he is not far removed from the position of Koffka as regards instinct (cf. *The Growth of the Mind*, p. 106), while his account of the conditioning of the love-emotion brings him very near to the important group of psycho-analysts represented by Kempf and Frinck (cf. Gordon, *Personality*, Chapter XII). The fundamental divisions among psychologists are often less serious than they appear.

I. A. RICHARDS

*The Region Cloud*. By Percy Lubbock. (Jonathan Cape). 7s. 6d. net.

*The Region Cloud* is the work of a talented disciple of Henry James. It is remarkably well-constructed; but then it is not often that a writer works out his theory of the art of novel-writing before he has first given us the novels. Mr. Lubbock's last book, as the reader probably knows, was *The Craft of Fiction*, and *The Region Cloud* seems to be the result of his conclusions as to the best means of presenting a story. The theme is one that requires James's methods, and, as readers of *The Craft of Fiction* will agree, has certainly been chosen on that account. The various 'lights' which, as they appear, slowly illuminate the truth of the situation to the hero—if one may be allowed so to call the character through whom we see everything, are placed by an author who has not read *The Awkward Age* in vain. But though *The Region Cloud* is no mere imitation, though the discipleship is genuine enough, one does not feel, as in a work by James, that the 'case' has been fully dealt with; and one lacks the flavour of that queer, elusive beauty, which

is the peculiar and ever-attractive attribute of James's delicate, brooding intelligence. This is perhaps an unreasonable demand that Mr. Lubbock should be Henry James; but when the instrument that has been fashioned and fully used by a genius is played upon by someone else, unreasonable demands are apt to be made. When the arm is so very like the arm of Esau, the sound of Jacob's voice is a little disturbing.

One is allowed to view Mr. Lubbock's story only through the mind of a young writer named Austin. He is of the Finer Grain, the Better Sort. His mind is one which has to munch its experiences a long time before it can digest them. He is poor; but a 'windfall' of twenty pounds has given him a short holiday. We meet him as he sits alone in an old French inn. He has finished 'a lovely meal', and a 'golden-hearted bottle' has laid a spell of repose upon his mind. He intently observes a distinguished-looking stranger who also sits alone, but who is so surrounded by the civility of hotel servants and personal attendants that, to Austin, he is alone only in his majesty. Austin weaves his fancies round a man who, he feels sure, is one of the great ones of the earth, and he is made almost dumb with astonishment when the stranger comes over to his table and begins a conversation. Austin is told that his loneliness, intelligence, and gift of sympathetic understanding were visible at first glance. The stranger is John Channon, the world-famous painter. Austin becomes a secretary to the great man, and through the maze of his hero-worship the painter assumes the proportions of a Napoleon. Indeed, it would seem that Austin remains for some time under the influence of the 'golden-hearted bottle', as well as of the painter's flamboyant personality, for at first everything about Channon is a thing for him to marvel at. Channon's free, roving manners, his ceaseless activity, his grandiose schemes, his beautiful house (the author of *Earlham* has almost made the painter's home a character in the story), all point to the towering, the overwhelming genius of Channon. He is a great painter and a great man. Gradually, however, Austin learns to think differently about his hero. His intelligence, which resembles more the mills of God than the mind of a Henry James, at length makes him aware of Channon's essential vulgarity. The real Channon, he finds, is thick-skinned, mentally and morally. He has done things, he continues to do things which upset Austin. Finally disillusioned by the discovery of 'a crawling

plot' which Channon has engineered in order to obtain more money for his grand schemes, Austin leaves his service. And that is the story.

One is not quite certain whether, in the end, one is supposed still to believe in Channon as a great painter, or whether he is to be taken as a charlatan in art as in life. This does not trouble Austin as much as it would some of us, for the point, to Austin, is more a moral than an artistic one. Channon, he thinks, should live finely and think finely—or at least should show signs of knowing that some of his 'means' were base even if his ends justified his use of them. But the painter is not fine, and at last Austin cannot help seeing that he is not. The worst of it is that the reader never shares Austin's illusions about his hero; and this is the flaw in an otherwise excellently wrought story. The author, you see, knew the truth about Channon before he began to write, and he has been unable to prevent this foreknowledge from affecting his presentation of the character. We cannot, or are not made to believe in Channon as Austin does; yet, since we see Channon only through Austin's eyes, we think: Austin saw this, heard that, why can he not see that Channon is not what he imagines? And it is not becoming in the *Finer Grain* to be less perceptive than the reader.

Of course, it is one of the most difficult things in the world for an author to make us believe that one of his characters is a great man, a genius. But take incidents in the first conversation between the two men. Channon discusses the 'windfall' which has given Austin his holiday, and tells him how *his* first 'plunge into the beauty of the world' was made possible. 'By accident, I climbed one day into the lap of a prince of the Philistines, and he was so surprised that he fed and lodged me for a month in his gilded brassbound court; and in return I was to paint him a colossal painting, a mile high, for the stucco of his billiard room; and I did paint it, I painted it till he found it perfectly suitable to his taste and fortune'. A little later, Channon asks Austin what he will do when success comes to him. Will he not bully the world that slighted him? Oh no; Austin is quite sure that *his* idea of the right sort of triumph was a better one than Channon implied, less vulgar, more dignified. When Austin shows to us Channon at his country house, Channon being rude to everybody in the traditional bohemian fashion, Channon spending loads of money, more money than he can earn even at a

thousand guineas a portrait, to build a memorial building which is to be a splendid and eternal monument to Channon's genius—well, we can only wonder, with some impatience, exactly how long Austin will take to 'find out' Channon. So that when 'the region cloud' at last hath masked the painter from his hero's view, we part from him and from his admirer without much regret.

Craftsmanship is to be found on every page of this book, and it does one's heart good to find it. The story is told in an impersonal conversationally-toned prose, the smooth-running pace of which, though a little monotonous, helps to give a unity of form that has been carefully striven for. But when Mr. Lubbock allows himself a purple patch, we may find a little gem like this:

'But Channon attended to Austin again at last. They were together in the picture-gallery, and a fine morning of March was shining and roaring outside; they stood together under the ceiling of blue and gold, while a great carnival of weather went shouting and bouncing among the trees, on the dip of the hill below the windows. The world outside was full of the enormous youthful ungainliness of the fine March morning, with all its untried energy let loose for a riot; and the clouds toppled and raced, the trees rocked, the sun flared out and was quenched and flared again; and Channon's talk, which began rather quietly, seemed small and anxious against that exuberant backing of light and noise'.

JOHN SHAND

*Restoration Comedy, 1660-1720.* By Bonamy Dobrée. (Oxford University Press). 6s. net.

*Essays in Biography, 1680-1720.* By Bonamy Dobrée. (Oxford University Press). 10s. 6d. net.

*The World's Classics: Comedies of Congreve.* Edited by Bonamy Dobrée. (Oxford University Press). 2s. net.

*The Hogarth Essays.* Histriophone by Bonamy Dobrée. (The Hogarth Press). 3s. 6d. net.

*Timotheus, the Future of the Theatre.* By Bonamy Dobrée. (Kegan Paul). 2s. 6d. net.

Mr. Dobrée is acquiring a very pleasant and enviable reputation. A volume of criticism, another of biography, an edition of Congreve,

a dialogue on dramatic diction and a brisk little satire under the innocent disguise of prophecy are here to show that the reputation is deserved. An attractive personality reveals itself in Mr. Dobrée's writings. He possesses the art of seduction, so useful in literature and kindred professions. He does not seek to intimidate the reader into accepting his views, but is content to persuade. A genuine enthusiasm for literature, an exceptional knowledge of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, plenty of ideas, an alert and witty style are among his virtues. He is perhaps a little too deferential to the literary tastes of Fashion and might at times incur the reproach which was levelled against his friend, Marivaux—qu'il courait après l'esprit. It must be admitted that Mr. Dobrée invariably catches his quarry and all efforts to avoid the Solemn Style call for sympathetic appreciation. Mr. Dobrée is certainly never dull even when he is unimpeachably sound.

There appears to be an impression that Restoration comedy is a private whim of Mr. Dobrée's, for which he is to be gently chided (on account of the impropriety of his subject) but yet indulged. This view is surely a little unfair to Sir Edmund Gosse, Professor Nettleton and Mr. Allardyce Nicoll, who have all given serious and expert attention to this important period of our drama. Compared with the Elizabethans, the dramatists of the Restoration have undoubtedly been neglected. One reason, perhaps, is that they were mostly read by enthusiastic Elizabethan students who were naturally disappointed to find a distinctly different tone and purpose in the Restoration dramatists. They were denounced as immoral or defended on the ground that they did not really mean what they said; and both these attitudes were obviously wrong methods of approach and hardly conducive to exact conclusions. Mr. Dobrée's brilliant little studies are an attempt to get beyond these misunderstandings and to judge the plays and their makers impartially, at any rate with intelligence. And this leads to some very pleasant reversals of accepted judgments. Everybody, in fact every schoolboy, knows that Macaulay said Wycherley tried to make vice pleasant, and most people confirm the judgment by reading the 'china' scene in *The Country Wife*. Mr. Dobrée has a very different and much more interesting view to expound:

' . . . Wycherley's joy was spoiled by his puritanism, and this in turn was cankered by scepticism. Both joy and puritanism were

bogeys to him; he hated the man of fashion as much as he did the fanatic, and if he preached the happy mean, as he did in this play through the victorious Englishman, it was not from the gently serious conviction of Molière, nor from an intellectual adoption as with Shadwell, but because on either side lay a trap too hideous to contemplate. In this play he laughed, it is true, yet one feels that if he had not, he would have, not wept, but raged'.

This is original, stimulating and very sharp-sighted. Compare this intelligent insight with the imbecility of W. C. Ward's introduction to Wycherley in the Mermaid Series. After saying that Wycherley is like a skunk, 'too filthy to handle and too noisome even to approach' (why the deuce did he write about his plays then?), Ward proceeds to reflect: 'how careful has Shakespeare been to preserve the dignity and delicacy of Viola under her disguise!' Ward apparently had not the remotest idea that he was supposed to be attempting to understand works of art which must have owed their preservation to something more than a skunk-like ability to disgust. It is by comparison with such inanities as this, that Mr. Dobrée's shrewd and intelligent analyses are thrown into proper relief. His expositions are so reasonable, so convincing, so obviously in accordance with the facts, that one accepts them without proper gratitude. He neither apologises, denounces, nor titters; he elucidates. Mr. Dobrée's sentences build up a credible, a human Wycherley in place of the grotesque monster created by critics who were surely not of this earth in their angelic stupidity. How revealing these lines are:

'He is not the preserver of social illusions, nor the wielder of the sword of common sense; nor does he create a fairy world in which all that is necessary is to be comely and to talk wittily. His laughter affords no relief, for it is too cynical; it is of the kind that is man's defence against complete disillusion, but it is too twisted to purge of discontent'.

Wycherley, in fact, is shown here not as an absurd and incredible monster, but as a man wounded by life, and bitterly wrestling with the wounder. And Mr. Dobrée owes this insight not only to his artistic sensitiveness but to a passion for sincerity. Only those who have had the courage to face life's horror as Wycherley did can understand his brutal irony. The opposite to this view is what we call Victorianism, a word which (obviously with some injustice)

calls up the vision of a sea of bug-whiskers and hypocrisy. The counterpart to Mr. Dobrée's exposition of the Wycherleys and Congreves is his exposure of Addison (the first Victorian, as Mr. Dobrée calls him) as witty and penetrating a piece of raillery as one could desire. At the end of the fifteenth round when Addison fails to take the count the Queen Anne's man has suffered unmerciful punishment and is in fact quite unrecognisable. Even Mr. Dobrée, warm with triumph and the exhilaration of a really sporting encounter is half-sorry for the parson in a tye-wig.

'He had embarked on life determined to be a model, and his treadings had never slipped'.

'He had deliberately formed, meticulously polished himself, until he glowed as a beacon for all mankind'.

'If he had been a hypocrite, he had been so of set purpose, for the sake of the general picture. . . .'

Who would not weep, if Atticus were he? Mr. Dobrée has created a really credible Addison, not quite so flattering as Macaulay's mythological study but apparently more in accordance with the facts.

This Addison study is perhaps the highest point yet touched by Mr. Dobrée as a biographer, though his Etherage and Vanbrugh are both excellent. He possesses a natural talent for biography more conspicuous than his talent for criticism. Perhaps he enjoys the creative feeling in writing biography more than soberer analysis of criticism and his enjoyment is communicated to the reader. As a merely personal judgment I should put *Essays in Biography* easily first among his books. What pleasant surprises Mr. Dobrée will have for us in the future one cannot tell; he is obviously only now beginning to feel a full confidence and sense of maturity. His work has already procured him a distinct place as biographer and critic, and he may look forward to the future with confidence.

RICHARD ALDINGTON

*Human Shows: Far Fantasies.* By Thomas Hardy. (Macmillan & Co.). 7s. 6d. net.

*Russet & Taffeta.* By George Rylands. (Hogarth Press). 2s. net.

*Poems.* By Barrington Gates. (Hogarth Press). 5s. net.

I remember that the head of my College at Oxford on one occasion,

with the air of a conspirator admitting a dangerous complicity, confessed to me, after looking round anxiously to make sure that we were unobserved, that he found nothing in Shelley's 'Skylark'. He did not deny that, in view of the poem's universal reputation, it was a criticism of himself rather than of Shelley. But, at least, he said belligerently, I have dared to tell the truth. It is with precisely the same emotion that I approach the poems of Mr. Thomas Hardy. My old Warden, except in respect of that solitary poem, was a devout admirer of Shelley's. In the same way any literary consciousness that I have owes its inception to 'Far from the Madding Crowd', 'The Return of the Native', and 'The Mayor of Casterbridge'. Later I shared the general thrill of amazed triumph that England in the twentieth century should have in 'The Dynasts' again rung with the authentic note of the epic. It is, therefore, very much in my own despite and against all my secret prejudices, that I am compelled to admit that I cannot lose myself in Mr. Hardy's verse, and that my almost passionate anxiety to share the general enthusiasm is in no way allayed by 'Human Shows : Far Fantasies'.

This failure on my part is all the more disturbing to me because the man to whom I owe my introduction to the love of verse, as well as Mr. de la Mare—the poet's poet of our day—both patiently argued against my blindness. If one sought through all English literature for a violent contrast between two poets, none more violent could be found than that which distinguishes Mr. Hardy from Mr. de la Mare. Mr. de la Mare has impregnated exquisite rightness of form with so subtle a life that his lines have almost a physical aroma. Mr. Hardy is almost wholly indifferent to the shape in which his verse is arrayed. Mr. de la Mare is for ever swinging the thin curtain which separates life from 'death's other kingdom' so that you almost hear the accent of immortality. Mr. Hardy is fiercely concerned with the very centre of actual doing, and death is to him the natural disaster which consummates the tragedy of life. Mr. de la Mare writes his poems, and expects them to think out their own philosophy (and they do!). Mr. Hardy stubbornly argues, and expects his poems to invest themselves in loveliness without any assistance from him.

As I say, the contrast is violent, and the list of differences could be continued almost indefinitely. It is, therefore, in the highest degree significant that Mr. de la Mare should recognise in Mr.



Hardy, the whole of whose aim is utterly different from his own, a sovereign poet. I have therefore to combat not only my own very real reluctance to doubt, but to dissent from the opinion of a poet, whose view on almost every point but this I would accept unquestioningly.

The claim made for Mr. Hardy is that he is the almost undiverted voice of life speaking, and speaking with the natural rough accent which underlies all civilised refinements. It would, it is urged, be as sensible to expect a newly-ploughed field to be as easy for the feet as a city pavement as to seek in Mr. Hardy's loam-rich utterance the dulcet semitones of mannered verse. To understand him you must return to the soil, and overhear with him the slow revelation of natural growth, fading, death and renewal. There are people, it is contended, so sophisticated that mother earth has no appeal for them. For these Mr. Thomas Hardy also will have no appeal. But anyone who can still return to his origins will find himself not only at home, but find his home rendered *sub specie aeternitatis*.

I know of no answer to this claim. I am, for example, extraordinarily conscious of its invincible truth in respect of the novels. They breathe, like the world at night, deeply and slowly. They neither assert nor seek. They exist, it would seem, in accordance with the impulse of the sun, or under the cold unmeaning reflection of the moon. But for me the poems have no such life. And, if I attempt to explain to myself why this is so, I would find the answer in the essential difference between verse and prose. No one has ever defined that difference, but everyone has felt it. It may perhaps be expressed by urging that, while there is nothing that prose cannot say, it is in poetry that we find the things that can only be suggested. Poetry has an unspoken and unspeakable background, into which the poet flickeringly permits a beam to stray, and the mind of man ventures timidly, but with the exaltation of stout Cortes into the unknown that is the more enchanted because it is of its very nature unknowable. This quality of the surd is, for me, definitely absent in the poems of Mr. Hardy, and therefore, whatever their merit as an interpretation of life, whatever their stubborn resistance to time and change, I cannot place them where I would so gladly have them in the Company.

It is difficult to judge any poet by a single poem, and to confess of any poet that only a single poem is known still more difficult.

But I am in that position with Mr. Rylands. 'Russet & Taffeta' is the first of his poems that I have seen, and I am called to express a view on that one. I am sure, of course, that I am writing myself down an ignoramus, for it is impossible that this should be the first public appearance of Mr. Rylands. There is such easy happy grace in this poem of the loss of a too cultured mistress that begins oh exquisitely! with:

'When the light tread of the dancers no more, no more  
The throbbing pulse of the drum'

and ends:

'Bend your smooth head in the candleshine,  
With an intimate look at the silver and fruit,  
Tapping your slender glass with one jewelled finger;  
And murmur low as the clear knell rings on the air  
"A Mariner dies".'

But if it be not the first, nor the only poem why has the Hogarth Press not given a puzzled critic more to bite on? (And why is a poem so slender exposed to gaze in a cover that looks like an oilcloth after two poached eggs have been spilt over it?) Why is one not given the opportunity of learning whether this is a flash in the pan—or, to vary the trope, whether Mr. Rylands is likely to leap out of this frying-pan into the true poetic fire? I can only say that for the first time in years I have regretted the shortness of a book of verse. I am teased and distracted as by a little foot peeping out from behind a velvet curtain. Is there a real beauty behind? I can't guess, but I should very much like to know.

Mr. Barrington Gates, on the other hand, presents ample material for judgment, and the judgment cannot, I think, be other than favourable. Mr. Gates belongs to the intellectuals, which is to say that he possesses one of the qualities plentifully lacking in many contemporary singers. But unlike most of the few others who have brains, he has a definite gift of song. He thinks his world out for himself, blows his own bubble, and the bubble catches, as it drifts, lights that belong not to Mr. Gates, but are the gift of some unperceived sun glancing through cool leagues of wonder. Do not be misled by that sentence into supposing that I am presenting the bays (if indeed they were mine to present) to Mr. Gates. He has a long

way to go yet, but some of the way he has gone already. In 'Waits', for example, he has written a poem which may be either an account of the Nativity, the adventure of the human soul, or a rebuke for boys singing a Christmas carol out of tune. It may be any of those things, and indeed it is all three, because here, as in other places, his eager thoughts, not yet under full control, tend rather to run their heads against one another. And though two heads may be better than one, this does not apply when they are in collision. But as the result of the impact, not only Mr. Gates, but at least one reader sees stars, and not unbeautiful ones. Or again in 'The Garden' he writes:

'O precious moment  
To stand and know  
In Time's black heart  
What wonders grow,  
What loveliness  
Beneath Time's snow'.

There is a sense of urgent birth about this as about much of his work. Lovers of verse will do well to watch Mr. Gates.

HUMBERT WOLFE

*Collected Essays of W. P. Ker.* Edited with an introduction by Charles Whibley. (Macmillan). Two vols. 25s. net.

The qualities that made W. P. Ker an influence in his time, not only among his immediate disciples, but even in remoter haunts of aspiration, are well represented in the two volumes of essays and lectures which Mr. Whibley has gathered together; and what these qualities were Mr. Whibley tells us with a good deal of zest in his introduction to the volumes. He lays stress on Ker's adventurous spirit—in life and in criticism—on the masculinity, vigour and decisiveness of his character, his good fellowship and his love of walking. All these qualities we can discern in his writing—even his love of walking—and there is no better single word for his total quality than the word *gusto*, which he was so fond of borrowing from Hazlitt. These essays cover a wide range of literatures and a diversity of aspects: he was a specialist, but the whole of literature was his province, and that, for Ker, meant the whole of history. We had almost written 'the whole of *life*', but there is one reservation

to make. Life only begins where history ends, and at this point Ker lost touch with reality.

His limitations were due to a certain defect of imagination, or perhaps we should say of *inspiration*. He was unconscious of the creative impulse—the impulse to fashion things newly—and this is a fatal fault in a critic. It explains the nature of his conservatism—not that there is anything wrong in conservatism itself; but there are many kinds of conservatism, and Ker's was a rather narrow and even stupid kind—the kind that 'stays the approach' of the electric light and the bathroom. There is, especially for the student of Romantic literature, a great temptation to adopt a sentimental attitude towards modern life; and this need not involve a sentimental attitude towards the Middle Ages. Within his sphere the critic can have all the poise and equanimity of a symmetrical mind; but the facts of daily life are too much for him, and instead of applying to them the intelligence and energy he has devoted to the past, he adopts an impassive and wilful attitude of negation. The present involves an unknown element, the act of 'becoming'; to incorporate this element in any act of criticism or judgment implies a creative faculty; lacking this faculty, as Ker seems to have done, one has, with his predilections, to seek refuge in the past. Besides the love of truth, there is the passion for certainty, and this, as Ker pointed out in his excellent essay on Pascal, is not quite the same thing. Pascal had both, he said, but Ker himself had only the one—the passion, as he called it. But Pascal, with both, was the better conservative—was and is the only possible and essential kind of conservative. But we must not rebut claims which Ker never made for himself, and which, indeed, even Mr. Whibley would not make for him. The passion for certainty carried him as far as most men are destined to go, and in these two volumes we get the characteristic fruits of that passion: essays in research and exposition and appreciation for which the body of our criticism will ever be the richer and our understanding the better.

HERBERT READ

*Mr. Shaw and 'The Maid'.* By the Rt. Hon. J. M. Robertson.  
(R. Cobden-Sanderson). 5s. net.

It is itself a worn-out proverb, that no philosophy is ever refuted, but every philosophy becomes outworn. The fact that Mr. Bernard

Shaw's currency is steadily declining in value, as more and more of it appears in circulation, and the probability that in ten or fifteen years it will no longer be accepted at all, do not constitute sufficient evidence that it is bad money. The more intelligent among those persons who have lost interest in anything that Mr. Shaw says, ought to be glad of some proof that their feelings are justified. Mr. Robertson has provided for such people a very valuable document. There are still many people so devoted as to stop their ears to any criticism of Mr. Shaw whatever, and, on the other hand, a growing number who are too fatigued by him to want to think about the matter at all. But no one should be too tired of the subject to read Mr. Robertson's small book. In 'St. Joan' Mr. Shaw has unluckily chosen a subject in which Mr. Robertson has interest and of which he has knowledge. Mr. Shaw's subject is also one in which Facts matter. Mr. Robertson likes Facts, and deploys his facts with a grim northern wit which operates with the effect of a steam roller.

Mr. Robertson's book is so brief, and his arguments so compact, that it would be a pity to attempt to summarise or select; everyone who is interested in the truth will read the book. Mr. Robertson is a Rationalist, with a genuine respect and admiration for Sainte Jeanne; but his book is of equal value to people who approach the problem from an orthodox Christian standpoint. For what issues most clearly from a reading of Mr. Robertson's book is Mr. Shaw's utter inability to devote himself wholeheartedly to *any* cause. To Mr. Shaw, truth and falsehood (we speak without prejudice) do not seem to have the same meaning as to ordinary people. Hence the danger, with his 'St. Joan', of his deluding the numberless crowd of sentimentally religious people who are incapable of following any argument to a conclusion. Such people will be misled until they can be made to understand that the potent ju-ju of the Life Force is a gross superstition; and that (in particular) Mr. Shaw's 'St. Joan' is one of the most superstitious of the effigies which have been erected to that remarkable woman.

T. S. ELIOT

*The Making of Americans.* By Gertrude Stein. Being the History of a Family's Progress. (Contact Editions, Three Mountains Press, Paris, Ile Saint Louis, Quai d'Anjou 29).

This is not, at first sight, one of Miss Stein's most difficult works

. . . reading it is not so much like running to catch a racing motor going at full speed, as climbing on the back of an untamed buck-jumper when it is apparently asleep. This seems quite easy, until you try to do it; then you get thrown, by sentences like this: 'Mr. Hersland, as I said once when speaking of the kind of loving he had in him, Mr. Hersland had then in the beginning of his middle living, had then his wife to content him. She was then a pleasant feeling in him, she was then a little of a joke to him, she had then still a little resisting for him, he then did not much brush her away from around him, he did not then forget about her existing, in his feeling, she was then still important to him. As I was saying, then in their younger living, still in the beginning of his middle living she gave him all the stimulation he needed to attract him, for his loving; he was not then yet full up with impatient feeling, he had then yet a pleasant feeling in living and her resisting was important enough to him to hold him. Later he needed more to fill him in his latest living when he was shrunk away from the outside of him, when he had not enough beginning enough impatient feeling to fill him, he needed then another kind of woman'.

This passage shows how the difficulty lies in the giddy swirl and vitality of the style. But no amount of difficulty should discourage anyone interested in literature and in life from reading this book, the product of one of the richest, and at the same time most subtle, minds of our time. We do not find here that objective quality, that new yet absolutely truthful way of seeing the material order of the world, which makes Miss Stein's *Geography and Plays*, as far as this reader is concerned, one of the most exciting books of our time. To me, Miss Stein is even more interesting when she is dealing with things seen, and with the psychology of words, than when she is dealing with things unseen, and with the psychology of people. Still, the wisdom, the rich loamy life, the vitality, and the insight contained in this book are of an astounding order.

All through the book, Miss Stein's unusual, speedy, high-pressure style, which varies its rhythm according to the characters she is describing, gives the impression of life being woven on noisy, ceaseless, yet mysterious shuttles—and again, of the household sounds and the noise of ordinary life by which we are surrounded, and in which our existences are rooted.

Miss Stein calls the book *A History of a Family's Progress*. But

it is much more than that—it is the history of the growth, the flowering, and the decay of all of us.

EDITH SITWELL

*Three Plays.* By Noel Coward. (Ernest Benn, Ltd). 10s. 6d. net.

Mr. Coward has been absent long enough for us to estimate his talent and his achievements, at the end of what may (or may not) be the first stage in his career. When he has established his financial position, and dust is settling on his English laurels, he will perhaps return from America and devote himself to reading, thinking, and writing plays. His tempting alternative is to dance, to act, to enjoy life, and to compose quite admirable music and lyrics for *revues*.

As a dramatist, he excels at two things: 'making scenes', in the domestic sense, and dialogue. The first (already apparent in *The Rat Trap*), is connected with a discovery on which depends the secret of half his success. That simple discovery is this. Our nerves are more susceptible than our hearts. The heart, like a wax figure stuck with pins, melted before the slow fire of war, is no longer penetrable stuff. *Ce qui remue*, not *ce qui émeut*, is now the weapon of the dramatist.

Mr. Coward plays relentless chromatic scales upon the nerves of his audience. He mirrors the post-war society which he knows, and in that society, crises in human relations are hysterical rather than tragic. In the second act of *The Vortex*, Nicky hammers out rag-time on the piano, while his mother spits at his fiancée and screams to her lover to come back—melodrama in the original sense of the word. In the third act he sweeps glass bottles and powder bowls off the dressing-table with a crash, after which the play expires in sobs from sheer exhaustion. The curtain falls, the emotional air-raid is over. What remains? Not calm of mind, all passion spent, for the nerves are still vibrating painfully. Our values, our ideas, our philosophy of life, have not been affected. One must suppose that the modern audience is so jaded that their emotions do not need purging but agitating.

The theme of *The Vortex* is, to some extent, the theme of *Hamlet* and of *The Seagull*. Here, for instance, is a curious parallel.

*Hamlet* :                      Mother, for love of grace  
Lay not that flattering unction to thy soul,

That not your trespass, but my madness speaks;  
It will but skin and film the ulcerous place. . . .

*Nicky*: You haven't understood. My God, you haven't understood. You're building up silly defences in your mind. I'm overwrought. To-morrow morning I shall see things quite differently. That's true, that's the tragedy of it. . . .

Why does one not care about Nicky and his disillusionment as one does about Hamlet's and about Kostya's? Because Mr. Coward's dialogue does not illuminate the characters from within but gets between us and them. He must make sparks by striking one of them upon another, like flint upon steel. None of them exist without an audience or a vis-à-vis. Shakespeare, of course, was able to employ the soliloquy, and Chekov naturalised it. The thoughts of his (Chekov's) characters spring from the heart and are uttered irrespective of their surroundings.

Although his skill and facility in dialogue handicap Mr. Coward's more serious work, it is the flesh and blood of his comedy. *Fallen Angels* roused the misogelast, the laughter-hater, who 'soon learns to dignify his dislike as an objection in morality'. Yet he might have soothed himself with Lamb's defence of Restoration Comedy; for Jane and Julia (who speak exactly the same language and belong neither to Bohemia, Society, or Suburbia), have perhaps, 'got out of Christendom into the land—what shall I call it?—of cuckoldry—the Utopia of gallantry, where pleasure is duty, and the manners perfect freedom'.

The supreme merit of Mr. Coward's dialogue is that he speaks the dialect of the day; Messrs. Arlen, Maugham and Lonsdale, in their search for epigrams, and even Mr. A. A. Milne, do not. He does not depend upon style but upon the modernity of his idiom. The effect, therefore, is immediate but ephemeral. *Obleeged, rally, tay*, and the rest have often teased the ear, at the Lyric, Hammersmith, but Congreve's and Goldsmith's sensibility to words, their cadences and antitheses—their style, in fact, eternises the dialogue. Mr. Coward shows no signs (as yet) of that sensibility, that sophistication; his dialogue reveals an acute sense of the stage, not of literature. In his comedies the conversation is so natural and catches so exactly the bantering, egotistical, outspoken tone of the modern generation (to which, of course, many in the sere and yellow leaf belong), that it seems to have an element of caricature. *Hay Fever* makes the



same appeal as, say, *Love's Labour Lost* or *Patience*; makes one laugh at oneself. Times change; it is not affectation or decadence, the taffeta phrase or being intense that he aims at. He portrays a society, in which, to quote Lamb again, 'there is a certain privation of moral light', in which there is no distinction between the conversation of women and that of men, but only, in its place, between that of the 'hearties' and the non-hearties.

Mr. Coward's *milieu* is small and he impersonates most of the characters. When 'terribly grand' (and other words that Cowards use), is as dated as 'vastly elegant', will he hang quite out of fashion? Will *Fallen Angels* read like last year's *Punches* in a dentist's waiting room? At present he is proving the truth of the adage, 'Nothing succeeds like Success'. Disaster might turn him into a serious playwright as it turned Byron into a poet a hundred years ago. Or will one of Emulation's thousand sons out-Coward Coward?

GEORGE RYLANDS

*Critical Essays.* By Osbert Burdett. (Faber and Gwyer). 7s. 6d. net.

This new volume of miscellaneous critical essays will perhaps add little to the reputation of the author of *The Beardsley Period*, but it will serve to reveal to a fuller extent the range of his sympathies. The best of the essays deal with themes related to the earlier work—with Hawthorne and Meredith, Oscar Browning and Frank Harris. On such subjects Mr. Burdett writes with an easeful pertinence which gives to his essays a personal quality. His point of view is not that of a dogmatic theorist—not even that of a critic *à l'outrance*: it is too urbane, too restricted, almost too polite. But this is not to say that Mr. Burdett lacks consistency: his writing has the unity derived from a personality and a temperament, though not that of a creed or a philosophy. He stands apart from the democratic tradition, and in an essay on 'The Effect of Printing on Literature' he traces the demoralisation and emasculation of modern English literature to the multiplication of readers and the consequent commercialisation of the literary output:

'You may say that the effect of printing on literature has been to turn an art into an industry, an aid to training into a branch of commerce. For the crowd is able richly to reward any writer who appeals to it by flattering its ignorance or pandering to its

vulgarity. But when the power of the purse obtains a dominating influence in any of the arts, the means whereby this power is exercised becomes the master and not the servant of the art in question. It may be said that the power of the purse has always influenced art, but there is all the difference between the purse of the private patron, and the purse of the general public. The private patron is a human being: the general public is a monster. That is why, despite the abuses of the private patron, the arts can flourish under the eye of a despot, and cannot flourish under that of a demos: they can keep alive despite it, that is all. Both despot and demos control the means of publication. But the aims of the patron, even when corrupt, are at least personal and restricted, while the aims of the demos are anti-personal and pervading'.

But whilst his general attitude is anti-democratic, it is far from being snobbish or pedantic. 'The root exists for the flower, and not the flower for the root' is a phrase of Coventry Patmore's which he has taken very much to heart, and this results not only in a care for the humane element in literature—the element of active life, of events turned into images and ideas—but also in a plea for the freedom to express this element in all its essential vigour and simplicity. To see the necessary connection between the heights of art and the depths of life—between the aristocracy of the artist and the vulgarity of his element—is a rare perception. Mr. Burdett nowhere illustrates it better than in his essay on 'The Art of Mr. Chaplin':

'Mr. Chaplin's favourite gesture is one of embarrassment, his characteristic hero the poor simpleton in a friendless world. In his hands the youngest of the arts has thus revived one of the oldest of traditional figures. The Chaplin hero is none other than the Holy Fool of other times. Each of these pilgrims is your guileless Christian on his progress through a wicked world, and if we are asked where Christian art is to be seen alive and stirring at the present day, the true answer is upon the films of Mr. Chaplin. Perhaps that is why his appeal is universal, and was first recognised by the poor and unlettered'.

H.R.

*All God's Chillun Got Wings.* (With *Desire Under the Elms* and *Welded*). By Eugene O'Neill. (Cape). 7s. 6d. net.

One is diffident of passing judgment upon a play which one has not

seen upon the stage, but Mr. O'Neill's plays—especially the first of these three—are so readable, and so impressive when read, that their publication in a book must be noticed. I believe that in America, where Mr. O'Neill's plays have had a prodigious success, their author is placed with Pirandello, or even above Pirandello, as the author of a renaissance of the drama. This enthusiasm, for either Mr. O'Neill or Signor Pirandello, I cannot share. I know that Pirandello is a master of the technique of the theatre, as I have seen one or two of his plays; I believe O'Neill to be the same, because of the esteem which he enjoys. In reading *All God's Chillun Got Wings*, we stick at the representation of the two principal actors, in successive scenes, in childhood, in adolescence, and in maturity; we wonder whether the play must not somewhat drag, from the lack of unity due to the attempt to cover such a span of time. But Mr. O'Neill has got hold of a 'strong plot'; he not only understands one aspect of the 'negro problem', but he succeeds in giving this problem universality, in implying a wider application. In *this* respect, he is more successful than the author of *Othello*, in implying something more universal than the problem of race—in implying, in fact, the universal problem of differences which create a mixture of admiration, love, and contempt, with the consequent tension. At the same time, he has never deviated from exact portrayal of a possible negro, and the close is magnificent. The other plays show the same ability at work, but are intrinsically less interesting.

T.S.E.

*The Poems of John Milton.* Arranged in chronological order with a preface by H. J. C. Grierson, F.B.A. The Florence Press. (Chatto & Windus). 2 vols. 12s. 6d. net each.

This edition of Milton's poems has at least three claims on our attention. The first is the chronological arrangement—essential for an understanding of the poet's development, but a task involving so many difficulties that we are left full of admiration for the way in which Professor Grierson overcomes them. The second, and in the particular case of Milton, even more important feature of this edition is the serious consideration given to the original spelling, which has often a definite significance. Professor Grierson has adopted what seems to be the only reasonable compromise: he has modernised wherever there is no difference of sound between the

old form and the new, but has endeavoured to retain Milton's own spelling wherever it purposely illustrates his pronunciation. Milton had a deliberate system of spelling on which he depended for the correct rhythmical reading of his lines: the two chief examples are 'thir' for 'their' and 'bin' for 'been'. By these variants he meant to distinguish between the stressed and the unstressed use of the words. There are many other examples of the same purposive kind, some of them of more than rhythmical importance (such as 'blanc' for 'blank' in the famous passage on his blindness, where the whole meaning depends on the retention of 'blanc'), and the provision of an edition of Milton with this due regard for the significance of his text is an event of some importance. For the whole bearing of Milton on the development of English poetry is primarily technical: the influence which he wrought for good and for bad was operative on the texture rather than the content of our verse. In any other sense he is almost an insignificant poet: in contrast with Shakespeare or Wordsworth, or even good minor poets like Donne and Clough, he adds almost nothing to the development of intelligence.

In the actual editing of the text Professor Grierson seems to have been animated by that uniform good sense to which we already owe the standard edition of Donne. There is only one reading to which one might demur: II, I, 702-4, of *Paradise Lost* originally read:

'a second multitude  
With wondrous Art founded the massy Ore,  
Severing each kind, and scumm'd the Bullion dross:'

In the edition of 1674 a change was made, as follows:

'a second multitude  
With wondrous Art found out the massy Ore . . .'

Professor Grierson admits that 'it is very difficult to understand how the change could have been made except deliberately by Milton', and imagines that Milton made the change to render his meaning clearer. On the grounds that the meaning is really obscured by the change, Professor Grierson retains the earlier reading. But it seems obvious that Milton made the change to give the line a better rhythm; there is a slight unease about 'founded the massy Ore', which is obviated in 'found out the massy Ore'. The sense may be

obscurer, but the sound is better, and it must be confessed that most poets would, in such a case, shamelessly sacrifice sense to sound.

The third claim which this edition makes on our attention is its beauty: the type of the Florence Press, which is perhaps a little too spacious for a prose page, seems altogether admirable for verse. The binding and the paper, and above all the relatively moderate price, complete the fitness with which this essential text is presented.

H.R.

*The 'Old Vic'.* By Cicely Hamilton and Lilian Baylis. (Cape). 12s. 6d. net.

A large proportion of the best actors and actresses of the day have had the experience of seasons at the 'Old Vic'. It would be interesting to know something of the methods of 'Old Vic' players, something of their æsthetic ideas and purpose. Dignified and stimulating presentations of Shakespeare, an incredibly excellent delivery of *Everyman*, rouse this interest. Yet this long, detailed narrative entitled *The 'Old Vic'* leaves our curiosity on these points unsatisfied: we are invited instead to consider the 'Old Vic' theatre as a personality, which, having lived through degenerate periods and moral struggles, has arrived at the fulfilment of philanthropic administration.

*Fishmonger's Fiddle.* By A. E. Coppard. (Cape). 7s. 6d. net.

This is a very agreeable book to read. The reader passes from one story to another with a growing sense of the reliability of Mr. Coppard's work; of the accuracy of his psychological perception, the deftness of his description, the spontaneity of his humour. There is no affectation, and the machinery of his method (for he is a most methodical worker) never disturbs the delicate charm of the finished work.

The *Fishmonger's Fiddle* story is an interesting example of pure abstraction provoked by a minimum of definite physical fact. It is well chosen as the representative of the collection, the units of which are strictly separated by diversity of subject specially treated, and fundamentally united by a single personal emotion.

# FOREIGN REVIEWS

## AMERICAN PERIODICALS

*The Yale Review*, January, 1926.—A Jane Austen letter, Conrad's Diary, and a posthumous poem by Amy Lowell may be mentioned as promising more than a passing interest, though the poem proves to be a limping sentimental affair, and the letter is of no great importance. Conrad's diary is curious, because so un-literary. Mr. Curle, who introduces it, tells us that it is the only diary that Conrad ever kept, for 'he was not at all that type of man, and his piercing memory for essentials was quite sufficient for him to recreate powerfully vanished scenes and figures for the purposes of his work'. The diary is concerned with a journey up the Congo that Conrad made in 1890, and he subsequently made use of his experiences on this occasion for one of the best of his stories—*Heart of Darkness*. He does not seem to have made any actual use of the diary in writing the story, but Mr. Curle has found several parallel passages which show how closely he was depending on his experience.

*The Modern Quarterly*, Vol. 3, No. 1.—Mr. Calverton continues his study of sex expression in literature with an essay on 'Sex in Puritan Esthetics'. He relies mainly on his method of sociological criticism which we have already noted in these pages, and the 'sex-attitude of the *bourgeoisie*, in this instance of the Puritans', is therefore envisaged as 'but an outgrowth of the social economy of its life. It is but a rationalization of the economics of its existence. It is but a defence mechanism unconsciously designed to protect the private-property concept upon which it has thrived'. Mr. Walter Long writes on 'Commercialism and the Decay of the Theatre', and his comments on the 'little theatre movement' may be quoted here because of their equal applicability to similar phenomena in England:

'The little theatre movement is unquestionably a healthy protest against the present pathetic condition of the commercial theatre. But a number of factors have contributed to the minimization of influence which the little theatre has had upon both the established theatre and the people. Of these numerous derogatory factors we shall indicate only the most prevalent and the most harmful.

First, many of these rebel theatres have fallaciously established themselves in a kind of esthetic limbo. They have adopted the policy of "art for art's sake", completely oblivious to the fact that the drama is a social institution and can progress only as it takes root in the social background of a people. Again, the activities of many little theatres have been characterised by a purposeless adolescent exuberance, heedless of artistic standards and the slightest semblance of constructive policy. Finally, the greatest menace to the little theatre is prosperity. Once having escaped a state of financial indigence there is not a single little theatre that has withstood the temptation to enter the commercial field. To compete with the established theatre artistic standards must be replaced by business organisation. The theatre must pander to public taste or close its doors'.

Other interesting articles in this number are 'Three Poets of the Agrarian Revolution', by C. V. Boyer (dealing with Goldsmith, Crabbe and Ebenezer Elliott), and 'The Social Origins of American Negro Art', by W. E. Burghardt Du Bois. A short story by David Pinski is noteworthy.

*The Fugitive*, December, 1925.—With this issue *The Fugitive* suspends regular publication for an indefinite period. It is a quarterly magazine devoted exclusively to verse, so it is all the more surprising to read that this suspension is due, not to lack of funds, but to the impossibility of finding an editor to take over 'the administrative duties' of such a periodical. This number is distinguished by some interesting poems by John Crowe Ransom.

*The American Mercury*, December, 1925.—'Men of Art: American Style' is a forceful attack on modern painting, especially as it manifests itself at second hand in America.

'The trouble with painting in the modern world, and particularly in America, is that it has lost its spiritual office; it has ceased to function as a medium for communicating with intelligence and power the experiences of mankind and has degenerated into a study of physical processes. . . . If art, as Taine insisted, is a racial reflection, then what of the most advanced American product? In the aggregate it has only a laboratory value. Penetrate, if you can, these bloodless abstractions, these misbegotten offspring of

Cubism and Expressionism, and behold the commentary on American life—base cleverness, cheap generalization, shabby thinking, extraordinary imitative facility’.

Still more forceful—even bad-tempered—is the onslaught made by Mr. Ernest Boyd on Walt Whitman as ‘the first of the literary exhibitionists whose cacophonous incongruities and general echolalia are the distinguishing marks of what is regarded as poetry in æsthetic circles to-day’. Much of Mr. Boyd’s vehemence is justified, especially the share that falls to Whitman—‘The Father of Them All’. But a poem of Miss Marianne Moore’s hardly helps his case: it is too intrinsically interesting to be ranked with the other specimens of ‘eccentric typography’ which rightly infuriate Mr. Boyd. His attack on Whitman is well-directed, but rather spoilt by its violence; his case is really an expansion of Henry James’s description of ‘Drum Taps’ as the effort of ‘an essentially prosaic mind to lift itself by prolonged muscular strain into poetry’. And Emerson described ‘Leaves of Grass’ as a combination of the Bhagavad Gita and the *New York Herald*. Mr. Boyd quotes these dicta, but he does not add anything to the essential substance of them. Elsewhere in this number Mr. Mencken belabours the English novel. The immediate occasion of his scorn is *Christina Alberta’s Father*, of which he says:

‘All I desire to suggest is that an American novel one-half so bad, if sent to England for review, would get nothing beyond a few four-line sneers. More, it would deserve them—which is more than may be said of most of the American novels that English reviewers denounce. It is, in brief, a thoroughly bad piece of work—muddled in plan, carelessly written, and full of characters that creak in every joint. The central personage, ‘Albert Edward Preemby, a retired laundryman crazed by occultism and a delusion of grandeur, is never real for an instant. He comes into the narrative a lay figure and he passes out a mere outline scratched on pasteboard’.

I should not, myself, like to have to defend the modern English novel in general against Mr. Mencken’s animadversions; and I am quite willing to accept his opinion that the modern American novel is a much brighter affair.

It should be added that this number contains what purports to be the authentic text of ‘The Song of Shime’—

‘She was poor but she was honest . . .’



January, 1926.—In this number there are two articles of musical interest: 'The Dilemma of American Music', by Daniel Gregory Mason, and a reminiscent description of Edward MacDowell by Upton Sinclair. There is also a good short story by Ruth Suckow, and from the advertisement pages I have gleaned the following poem, from a volume called *The Weary Blues*, by Langston Hughes:

*To Midnight Nan at Leroy's*

'Strut and wiggle,  
Shameless gal.  
Wouldn't no good fellow  
Be your pal.

Hear dat music. . . .  
Jungle night.  
Hear dat music. . . .  
And the moon was white.

Sing your Blues song,  
Pretty baby.  
You want lovin'  
And you don't mean maybe.

Jungle lover. . . .  
Night black boy. . . .  
Two against the moon  
And the moon was joy.

Strut and wiggle,  
Shameless Nan.  
Wouldn't no good fellow  
Be your man'.

*Scribner's Magazine*, December, 1925 to February, 1926.—  
'The Bleeding Cross', in the January number, by Emerson Low, is an exceptionally good short story. Professor Phelps is as tiresome as ever. I have some examples of his humour in the last number of *The New Criterion*. When he is serious we also smile. Compare the following elegant opinion with Mr. Mencken's views on the same subject quoted above:

'H. G. Wells has done it again. *Christina Alberta's Father* is a brilliant novel, as full of real people as "Tono-Bungay". The artist and novelist have triumphed over the preacher and reformer, and we have a book of distinction, filled with observation, wisdom, and humour. He says that a certain Englishman had a *neighing* voice—can't you hear it?'

No, Sir, the voice we hear is *braying*, across the Atlantic.

*The Saturday Review of Literature*.—This weekly review of literature continues to consolidate its position; it gives an extraordinarily complete and competent survey of new books, it has regular items of distinction, such as Mr. Christopher Morley's causerie, 'The Bowling Green', and it publishes every week a critical essay of more than passing interest. Note especially an article on Stephen Crane by Thomas Beer (December 19th), one on 'Translations', by Ernest Boyd (December 26th), and 'An Englishman Presumes', by John Middleton Murry (January 9th).

## EXILES

*This Quarter*, No. 2.—The editors and contributors of this quarterly might resent its inclusion among the American periodicals, so it has been placed under the only heading that seems appropriate. *This Quarter* is published in Milan (Il Convegno, Via Borgo Spesso, 7), and is edited by Ernest Walsh and Ethel Moorhead. It is a massive periodical of nearly 350 pages, all of it very experimental, some of it rather dull, and a little of it decidedly interesting—notably three new Cantos by Ezra Pound, with all the expected firmness of phrasing, beauty of imagery, and intermittent obscurity. There is an instalment from work in progress by James Joyce: it has all the merits and defects of *Ulysses*, but nothing more. Of the other prose writers, Ernest Hemingway is the most vital, and his description of a bull-fight is a fine piece of prose, vivid and economical. The poetry is very uneven. Mr. Walsh is often too deliberately brutal, but he can manage his effects, as in 'Venus in a Pension' and 'A Serious Poem'. In general the atmosphere of the magazine is tiresomely adolescent, and we turn with relief to Raymond Knister's poems about horses; these are fresh and objective, and decidedly more masculine than most of the 'masculine protests' of

these exiles. The total impression is one of wilfulness. This is not the place to discourage any kind of literary experiment, but literature is something more than the expression of an individuality. It is a component element of a society, and only subsists in relation to some common ethos or national development. It must work within a tradition, with some lien on the dominant institutions of a race. All art is indigenous; otherwise it is in danger of being merely impudent.

H.R.

### FRENCH PERIODICALS

*Le Navire d'Argent*, November, 1925.—This is the first time we have had occasion to speak of *Le Navire d'Argent*, which is a new monthly edited by Mlle Adrienne Monnier, who runs 'La Maison des Amis des Livres', a lending library and bookshop, as well as a literary centre, in the rue de l'Odéon. In the same street, is a sister-shop, Shakespeare & Co. (no less!), an English and American bookshop and lending library, presided over by Miss Sylvia Beach, the publisher of *Ulysses*. *Le Navire d'Argent* has grouped around it very much the same circle of contributors as *Commerce* and *La Nouvelle Revue Française*; and its literary gods are the same; but Mlle. Monnier betrays a *penchant* for *les jeunes* which will perhaps distinguish her review.

In the November number, there is a remarkable essay by Ramon Fernandez, 'Autobiographie et Roman chez Stendhal'. M. Fernandez first of all analyses the psychology of Stendhal, as revealed in *Henri Brulard* and in the *Journal*, and then applies his discoveries to Stendhal's creative methods, as manifested in *Rouge et Noir*, his object being to prove Stendhal's right to the title of great novelist. The whole essay is to be read. There is only one comment I have to make on it, and that may be purely personal: I wish M. Fernandez had written it all in a language Stendhal would have approved of:

'Le roman est formé d'une suite de moments synthétiques, d'états psychiques absolus qui s'engendrent les uns les autres, et cette création continue ne peut être réglée que par la durée de l'écrivain, par l'association de ses états intérieurs. Et pour ce qui est de l'analyse, elle-ci est postérieure à la synthèse dramatique, la découverte naissant du mouvement de l'écriture qui recrée le mouvement de la vie'.

A convenient algebra, no doubt (the italics are M. Fernandez's); but it is a question whether, in a literary review, such statements should not be given a literary form. Even the scientist, after manipulating his equations, endeavours to explain them and his results: to give his hearers or readers an image of what has happened; but the psychologist, who uses words and phrases in the same way instead of algebraic symbols, forgets, because his instruments are words, that they are almost as arbitrary and empty of real content as the algebraic symbols of the scientist. There are half a dozen phrases in the passage quoted above which, in themselves, are meaningless. They have had a meaning added to them, and it is this meaning, I submit, which the literary critic should give, after the psychologist has made his analysis.

To the same number, M. Valéry Larbaud contributes *Stratégie littéraire: une Campagne*, an account of how he came to contribute a series of articles on French literature to an Argentine newspaper. M. Larbaud, besides being a good novelist, poet and critic, is an exceedingly clever man; he has written in his own English for the defunct *New Weekly*, and his articles in the Argentine newspaper, *La Nación*, were in his own Spanish. He makes some very just and interesting remarks on the pleasure young men find in writing foreign languages; and it appears that there was a moment when M. Larbaud was undecided whether to adopt French or English as his medium. The French language won; and perhaps literature is the richer for it.

*Le Navire d'Argent* has been publishing a bibliography of English and American literature translated into French. The sixth list of the series is in this number; it covers 'the last Victorians, the Edwardians and the Georgians'. It is a selective bibliography, certain names of authors who have been translated but were not thought worthy having been left out; but why, say, John Rodker, Hope Mirrlees, Hugh Walpole and Frank Swinnerton were included and Frank T. Bullen, W. W. Jacobs, Leonard Merrick and Mayne-Reid were omitted (a list of the unworthy is given), it is not possible to say, or perhaps it is.

*December.*—M. Jean Prévost has an article on *La jeune génération littéraire*. The noisiest of the younger generation, and even, in some cases, those with the most talent, are *surréalistes*, after having

been *dadaïstes*. I do not propose to give a definition of *surréalisme*: it has no definition, by definition. M. Prévost quotes this passage:

‘L’ombre qui mesure et balaye mes jours me semble parfois bue par les sables. Privé du temps, à la tangente de ma poitrine s’affirme un plateau inhumain, chargé de strates mystérieuses, et d’une dévastation catalaunique des silences. Mais ni ma paume ni mes mains ni mon haleine n’étaleront le massif éventail, offensé des traces monotones d’une dentelle de plomb, ni ceux où je faisais glisser un filet de mon Styx, mais j’éploierai quelques restes d’un chêne broyé, noirci de la perversité du monde’.

The translation he gives of this is: ‘I am bored in front of my desk loaded with history books; I will not open either my books or my notebooks; I will read my newspaper’. There will always be a public who will find pleasure in solving such riddles, as there was in the days of the abbé Delille, whom M. Prévost calls the Cocteau of his time. The abbé wrote:

‘Ce froid célibataire, inhabile aux plaisirs,  
Qui de notre appétit contente les désirs’,

and meant a capon. Statius is full of such riddles. And there will always be another public, by far the larger, which will pretend to like what it does not understand—*le cas Valéry*, to which we are coming, is the outstanding example of the moment—in order to be in the latest cry. M. Prévost, *à propos* of the passage quoted above, says: ‘a preoccupation, a game of hide-and-seek if you like, which the *surréalistes* have inherited from romanticism, that is where genius must be placed: it always has to be put as far as possible from reason and in the latest of psychology’s fabrications. Romanticism had at its disposal only the blindness of inspiration and other gaudy rags; as soon as the unconscious was discovered, the inheritors of romanticism placed genius in the unconscious; when the subconscious was the fashion, genius went there as a matter of course; now that the psychologists are occupied with automatism, the *surréalistes* have bravely moved genius into automatism’. And that is one of their formulas (strange that there should be a formula to govern the production of the unformulated!) to allow your pen to write down without guidance or control anything that is passing through your head. Names?—Louis Aragon, Robert Desnos, Paul Eluard, André Breton—but these were all the old dadaists; and M. Paul

Valéry is a dadaist: in him Dada becomes Art, or a kind of art, the art of verbal sounds—but *attendons*.

February, 1926.—Stories by Jean Giraudoux and Jean Mistler; a note, by Benjamin Crémieux, on a neglected Italian novelist, Italo Svevo, with translations by Crémieux and Valéry Larbaud: 'c'est à James Joyce que revient le mérite d'avoir découvert Svevo et à Valéry Larbaud d'avoir été le premier français à l'apprécier'; an article by M. Abel Chevalley on Thomas Deloney, from a book, *Thomas Deloney et le Roman Corporatif*, which is about to appear. It is claimed that there is no other book in any language on the subject.

From a note on a visit of M. Paul Valéry to 'La Maison des Amis des Livres', this fragment of conversation:

'They always think', he said, 'that I have the same ideas as Mallarmé; but we differed very much, and especially in our conceptions of art; Mallarmé made a metaphysic of it; he thought that the world was created to be *represented*, and that representation—art—was the *thing in itself*. I, on the other hand, have never given to art, literary or other, an essential importance; I have never placed it above the other manifestations of life; for me, it is a *game*'.

And both, I think, are wrong; but Mallarmé is nearer the truth. Art is no *Ding an sich*; but it is probably the best of man's attempts to give expression to his feelings about the *Ding an sich*. On the other hand, if art is only a game, it is a game which may be played by four, three, two or even only one player; it ceases to be a communication, and becomes, in fact, a form of nihilism; and what is this but Dadaism, and what is M. Valéry's art but a refined form of Dadaism? And even this statement contains an element of contradiction, for it implies that form has been given to that which admits of no form. But perhaps M. Valéry's practice is better than his principles? If so, it is open to those who believe in him to convince me and to persuade me that some of the few hours of my life may be profitably spent on his work.

*La Nouvelle Revue Française*, January.—M. André Maurois, in *Les souffrances du jeune Werther*, gives an attractive chapter of the life of Goethe. M. Valéry Larbaud prints his preface for a Russian translation of the *Anabase* of Saint-G. Perse. M. Larbaud, surveying French poetry of the last thirty years, can see five monu-

ments: 'the enormous and immense dramatic and lyrical monument of Paul Claudel, which dominates the whole group; that of Francis Jammes, which has so traditional a character that it is above all at the interior that its novelty and the personal element it brought to French lyric poetry can be distinguished; the high tower and gracious portico of Paul Valéry; the terrace of Léon-Paul Fargue, where may be found the baroque ornaments of the balcony of Baudelaire and the vivifying influence of the inner romanticism of Arthur Rimbaud. Finally, the monument most recently acquired, and still unfinished, of Saint-J. Perse: his *Eloges* and his *Anabase*'. Perhaps, however, it is too early to speak of monuments.

M. Albert Thibaudet, who is a professor at the university of Upsala, and who, as is well known, contributes what might be called a critical leading article each month to the *N.R.F.*, intervenes in the debate between the abbé Bremond and M. Paul Souday on pure poetry. To the abbé Bremond, apparently, poetry, especially when it is *pure*, has never anything to say and never says anything. To M. Paul Souday (I take this from *Revista de Occidente*) pure poetry is reason embellished. For the abbé, Racine's line:

'La fille de Minos et de Pasiphaé',

is pure poetry, a conductor of a mysterious fluid (those mysterious fluids! they have disappeared from physics and an honest mysticism has taken their place), while, for M. Souday, it is a certificate of birth finely worded. Both are wrong; *la fille de Minos et de Pasiphaé* is Phèdre; it is:

'Cet heureux temps n'est plus. Tout a changé de face,  
Depuis que sur ces bords les dieux ont envoyé  
La fille de Minos et de Pasiphaé'.

But the debate arose over M. Paul Valéry's verses. M. Valéry has a supreme talent for setting people talking about him; the whole Latin world resounds with his name: France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Brazil, and, no doubt, the rest of Latin America. He is about to enter the French Academy, whose main duty is, I believe, to compile a dictionary of the French language. This dictionary has been in the making for several hundred years; and it is not finished yet. However, we can now set our minds at rest, for, with M. Valéry

at the Academy, we can peacefully regard the dictionary *sub specie æternitatis*.

M. Valéry's ambition, and with it he has achieved celebrity, has been, I understand, not to write poems, but to find general expressions for the poem, pure poetry, just as the mathematician finds a general expression for a set of given functions. It is a futile ambition for a poet. M. Ramon Fernandez recently told an audience at the Institut Français that M. Valéry confessed to him that for him (M. Valéry) *poetry was only sound*. So was poetry for Dada, and the sounds were at least ugly and strange. M. Valéry's sounds are familiar; they may be described as a sort of geometrical locus of the music of traditional French poetry, or as an expression of such an intention; and some misguided person has, I believe, translated M. Valéry into English; Rainer Maria Rilke has turned him into German. How? How? Will somebody now translate Bach for us? M. Thibaudet says: 'Pure poetry a Valerian would say, is as immaterial as algebra, algebra, possibility of a geometry as geometry is possibility of a matter. Mallarmé's failure consisted in not writing the Book, Koran or Bible, or better, office of the mass, for an ideal humanity. Valéry's failure will consist in not writing, in verse or in prose, a qualitative equivalent of the *Géométrie* of Descartes'. The failure of both consists, with Mallarmé, in a romantic, and, with Valéry, in a scientific (which, in this case, is only another form of a romantic) misconception of the limits of their material. Meanwhile, we are promised, from a Dutch publisher, the *Analecta ex MSS. Pauli Valerii*, and I find, in *Il Convegno*, this epigram on M. Albert Thibaudet:

'De monsieur Thibaudet la chance est singulière;  
C'est de vingt nations la gloire et le régal;  
La Suède dit: L'on croit que Paris le révère!  
Et Paris: Le bruit court qu'on l'admire en Upsal!'

*Commerce*, Autumn, 1925.—The fifth number of this sumptuous quarterly. M. Paul Valéry has three letters, *A, B, C*, of an *Alphabet*. M. Léon-Paul Fargue contributes a prose poem, *Tumulte*, which, he says, is equal to 1232.0; it probably is. M. Jean Paulhan gives an extremely interesting essay on the use and application of the proverb in the language and thought of the Madagascans. M. R. Kassner has *Le Lépreux* (apocryphal notes of the emperor,



Alexander I of Russia). There are poems by Francis Ponge, Archibald Macleish (in English these, with a French translation), and Hölderlin (translated) with documents concerning his madness; a very interesting short story by André Beucler, *Entreprise de Féeries*; and fragments of the *Microcosme* (published in 1562) of Maurice Scève, with notes by M. Valéry Larbaud. Scève appears to have been a neglected poet. M. Larbaud quotes from Ronsard:

‘ . . . Mais ma *voix offensée*  
 De trop de peur, *se retient amassée*  
 Dedans la bouche *et me laisse tout coi.*  
 Souffrir ne puis les rayons de ta vue:  
 Craintive au corps mon âme tremble émue;  
*Langue ne voix ne font leur action’.*

And then exclaims: ‘It is the third time you have said it, O great Eloquence! “I prefer to listen to Scève:

‘ Je sens en moi la vilté de la crainte  
 Mouvoir l’horreur à mon indignité  
 Par qui la voix m’est en la bouche éteinte  
 Devant les pieds de ta divinité’.

Who is the great poet this time?’ asks M. Larbaud, ‘and who the poet-orator? I will venture to say (and it can be verified): most of the Sonnets of Ronsard have all the appearance of Dizains of the *Délie* (by Scève) with four lines too many. They are, you might say, Scève watered down, puffed up, or spun out’.

*Le Disque Vert.*—A symposium on Isidor Ducasse (‘Comte de Lautréamont’), author of *Les Chants de Maldoror*.

*Les Cahiers du Sud.*—November and January numbers received.

F.S.F.

## ITALIAN PERIODICALS

*Il Convegno*, December, 1925.—Eugenio Levi contributes a full-dress article on Marino Moretti, poet and historian of apparently simple things and people. Ricardo Bacchelli takes up again the Figaro theme in *La Famiglia di Figaro*, of which the first two acts are in this number.

January, 1926.—*La Vecchina che scese a Montignoso*, by Ettore Allodoli; the third act of *La famiglia di Figaro*; G. B. Angioletti on *L'amorosa tragedia*, by Sem Benelli.

F.S.F.

### DANISH PERIODICALS

*Tilskueren*, December, 1925.—The chief place in this number is taken by a translation of Mr. Keynes' articles on Russia, which appeared recently in the *Nation*, and by an article by Professor Torm on the date of the New Testament writings. The editor contributes a review of new books. He has apparently been reading a mass of novels, among them Hutchinson's *The Way of God*, which, though interesting enough to read, are completely forgotten five minutes after the book is closed. As exceptions to these forgettable works he praises Karin Michaelis' *Lille Løgnerske* (*Little Liar*), and Einar Christiansen's *Ottilie*. A propos of Brousson's *Anatole France en Pantoufles*, M. Levin remarks: 'We can scarcely judge a book like this. The Northern form of modesty in life and literature is quite different from the Southern, and the conception of love changes with the climate. Moreover, our attitude to the great in literature is quite different from that of a Frenchman, who still keeps up the tradition of the Roman triumphal procession and follows the conqueror with ribald songs. Of this, and of Gallic wit, the book is evidence'.

There is also a long poem in irregular verse by Chr. Rimestad, *Greeting to Valdemar Vedel*, homage from a young to an older writer, and another, *Pa Tomten*, the reflexions of Einar Thomsen on the site of a burned-out building.

F.S.F.

### GERMAN PERIODICALS

*Die Literatur* (Berlin: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt).—The most interesting article in the December number of this ever more and more solid literary review is an essay on the philosophy of the novelist and poet, Otto Flake, one of the most attractive of the younger German writers. Herr Flake has reached his position rather in spite of than because of his philosophical tendencies. At least one

would say this if he were an English writer, for we do not take very kindly to a writer who—and this is a genuine example from one of his post-war novels, *Ruland*—makes a character, in an ordinary discussion of the influence of the newspaper press, talk about the ‘principle of causality’. But German readers like this kind of thing, and so, after all, it may be that the philosophical disquisitions which are to be found in all Herr Flake’s work, which would weigh down an English writer’s books, have contributed to his success. In his latest books, as the writer of this essay, Herr Paul Wegwitz, points out, the philosophical element has tended to predominate more and more, and lately the transition from being a novelist, as which Herr Flake enjoys a sure place in contemporary German literature, to being a philosopher pure and simple, as which his reputation has still to find a solid basis, seems definitely to have been made. It is not unimportant to notice that Herr Flake is an Alsatian, and he consciously makes the attempt to combine German solidity with the grace and clearness of style which distinguishes French prose. This cannot be called entirely a success in the works of fiction, but in the purely philosophical works Herr Flake has aimed at an aphoristic style apparently based on Chamfort or Rochefoucauld. This makes his philosophy, if something so unsystematised can be called such, at once interesting to read and difficult to summarise. But the foundation, very briefly put, is that ‘form’, which implies ‘individuation’, but also relation to the universe, is not something static but dynamic. To anyone in search of more information Herr Wegwitz’s article may be recommended.

Other noteworthy articles in this number are Herr Friedrich Hirth’s on contemporary French literature—chiefly dealing with the Gide-Béraud controversy—and Herr Hans Franck’s on contemporary German drama, comedy being the branch discussed. For the general reader the latter essay is perhaps too detailed, since in a discussion of present-day German comedy one would expect to find some notes on writers such as Max Mohr, Georg Kaiser—who has written excellent comedy—Carl Sternheim, and others. The Plattdeutsch playwright, Hans Ehrke, however, receives most attention. Perhaps the critic will return to the subject later.

The January number opens with a long and rather laboured explanation by the novelist and dramatist, Walter von Molo, of his reason for not signing the recent manifesto in favour of the liberty

of art, the occasion for this protest being the imprisonment of a young Communist poet. Her von Molo's argument seems to be that one must not confuse artistic liberty with political licence, and he wants to have a kind of artists' court of appeal in such cases. But the whole matter is chiefly of domestic interest. In the same number there is an essay on Dostoevsky as a psychologist, and a review of the collected works of Max Dauthendey, the excellent poet who died in Java during the war.

*Neue Rundschau* (Berlin: S. Fischer).—The December number contains an additional chapter to Gerhart Hauptmann's novel *Die Insel der Grossen Mutter*, which the writer omitted from the final version, and, in our opinion, was quite right to do so. But those who have read the novel—not long ago published in English—may like to read the intended postscript. The only other remarkable feature is a series of newly discovered philosophical and æsthetic aphorisms of Friedrich Schlegel, of which the following is characteristic:

'Klassisch ist, was zugleich Absicht und Instinkt hat, wo Form und Materie, Inneres und Aeusseres harmoniert. Korrekt ist negativ und absichtlich klassisch. Alles Klassische ist zyklisch; klassisch ist *zugleich* regressiv und progressiv'.

In the January number there was little of general importance, though students of the modern German novel would find the essay on Emil Strauss interesting. There was also an account, by the Soviet Commissar Lunatschky, of cultural and artistic conditions in Russia since the Bolshevik Revolution. The February number was decidedly interesting. After a thorough-going exposure of the 'race-theory' of politics by Professor Willy Hellpach came a sketch by the exiled Spanish writer, Miguel Unamuno, followed by a valuable account, by Ernst Robert Curtius, of Unamuno's place in contemporary Spanish literature and thought.

A.G.W.R.

## SPANISH PERIODICALS

*Revista de Occidente*, December, 1925.—This review *se fait rare*. We noticed the first number, and have not seen it since. Jorge Simmel writes on *El problema de la situación religiosa*, Antonio

Espina on *Las dramáticas del momento*, and J. Dantín Cereceda on *El hielo cósmico y la novísima meteorología de Hanns Fischer*. This last essay deals with the curious theory of a German, Hanns Fischer (his book: *Rhythmus des kosmischen Lebens. Buch vom Pulsschlag der Welt*), according to which, if I understand it rightly, the water-supply of the world is replenished periodically by contact with a band of cosmic ice stretching through space and the Milky Way; and this explains the world's weather. There is a note by Corpus Braga on the *Gravitations*, of Jules Supervielle, from which some references to M. Paul Valéry under 'French Periodicals' have been taken, and a note on Mallarmé's *Igitur*, by Antonio Marichalar, with further allusions to M. Paul Valéry, of course.

F.S.F.

# THE NEW CRITERION

## A QUARTERLY REVIEW

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VOL. IV, No. III

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JUNE, 1926

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### A COMMENTARY

**THE SUNDAY THEATRICAL SOCIETIES** During the last year or two the number of societies for subscription performances has increased amazingly. Besides the Stage Society, and its offshoots, the Phoenix and the Greek Play Society, there exist the Renaissance Theatre, the Film Society, and several societies for the production of the work of new or exotic playwrights. The number of these organisations is not, in an absolute sense, excessive: nearly every one of them has a distinct and praiseworthy purpose. But it is obvious that this kind of society cannot multiply, or even continue in its present numbers without some reconstruction. The support for it comes from a very small number of people, few of whom can be called enthusiasts: they grow tired of signing cheques, and what is still worse, grow tired of seeing each others' faces. Before we reach the point at which the 'revival' of interest in the theatre threatens to extinguish itself, it is well to consider whether a healthier organisation might not be manipulated.

**A NATIONAL THEATRE TOO EDUCATIONAL** Dissatisfaction with the contemporary 'commercial' stage can never be wholly appeased by any number of revivals, importations and private performances, though if these can be stabilised they may in time influence the public stage: the Phoenix helped to prepare an audience for 'The Way of the World'. On the other hand, the project of a national theatre, at which all master-

pieces shall be performed in rotation, is one which makes us quail. We have no confidence in any combination of persons which might rise to power; in any commissions, boards, committees or directors who might be elected to choose and produce the repertoire. Our contemporary, *The Mask* (April), is angry with the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust for bestowing £14,200 for the purchase of Sadler's Wells as 'an Old Vic for North London'. According to *The Mask*, the Carnegie Trust pronounces that 'drama is a definite factor in national education'. We have not verified the quotation, but the dreadful term, *definite factor*, rings true to the spirit of philanthropy, and so does *national education*. Civilisation, culture, and enjoyment of anything intellectual being suspect, they cannot pass authority unless disguised beneath the dim word 'education'—a word which has lost almost all meaning, but which still fortifies in utilitarian and democratic odour. A National Theatre is not a thing to educate anybody; it is something to which the public, in a very long time, must first be educated.

THE PRIVATE SOCIETIES AGAIN      It is impossible, in a metropolis, to obtain the conditions for a Maddermarket Theatre; though it might be possible, and is certainly desirable, to get Mr. Nugent Monck to stage performances for the societies in London. What practical suggestions we can make are barely these: (1) to legalise the Sunday performances as a public entertainment, so that they could be properly advertised and so that tickets could be sold at the door to anyone; (2) to organise the various societies so that a performance of one kind or another might be found every Sunday *at the same theatre*, and to advertise the whole organisation in such a way as to appeal to the desire for pleasure, not the cupidity for education or up-to-dateness. Enough recruits might be added to the audience to be disciplined into the *corps d'élite* of the general public; and at the same time a number of half-hearted social troopers would be released to the more congenial allegiance to Arlen and Coward.

THE PHŒNIX      Whether such a proposal be chimerical or not, it would be a very great pity if, in the meantime, The Phoenix were incinerated for ever. The Phoenix has done some very fine work under great difficulties. It has been limited in

its scope: with an uncertain and capricious public, it has been restricted to plays, among Elizabethan and Restoration Drama, for which the public was more or less prepared. Its greatest successes, therefore, have been in Restoration Comedy. There is a great deal more that the Phoenix could do; many Elizabethan plays which, if in a stable position, it might revive. But its peculiar value, among all the societies, is this: that the plays which it has presented, constitute an assertion of *literary* values on the stage. Now, whatever else may be said, good or bad, of contemporary drama here or abroad, we must agree that its literary value is almost null. We do not mean that plays are unreadable, but that they lack all beauty of phrase, thought and image. The modern tendency is opposed to Sophocles, Racine and Shakespeare; the performances of the Phoenix, where we may hear dramatic poetry which we have never heard, but only read, are of inestimable value in maintaining the importance of the literary element in drama.

THE MODERN STAGE      *The Little Review*, of New York, has published an instructive number, with many photographs, devoted to a recent Theatre Exhibition. It illustrates the scenery and expounds the ambitions of various contemporary producers, chiefly Russian. This modern theatre (Meierhold, etc.) appears to be one in which the drama is completely extinguished by the spectacle, by the satisfaction of visual sensations. It seems to originate in Russia and to percolate Germany to western Europe. We do not deny that such spectacles, such combinations of 'abstract machinery' and abstract masses of well-drilled human beings of symbolical significance, may be made very exciting and even moving. But a spectacle is only a spectacle, and the new Russian theatre appears to me a phenomenon of the revolt against the intellect. Similarly the cinema, because it is without words, is a potent agent against intellect. In a 'classical' drama the elements of thought, word and scene, of visual and aural rhythm, form a unity.

'THE ART OF BEING RULED'      Mr. Wyndham Lewis's new book\* might be added to those mentioned in the January *New Criterion* as significant of the tendency of

\* *The Art of Being Ruled*. By Wyndham Lewis. (Chatto & Windus.) 18s. net.



contemporary thought. It is a book which must be dealt with at some length in a later number: it requires both editorial mention and a review. For editorial purposes it is enough to observe that Mr. Lewis's observations of contemporary society tend toward similar conclusions to those of such critics as Benda, Babbitt, or Maritain, whose approach is very different. The artist in the modern world, as Mr. I. A. Richards pointed out in *The Criterion* of July, 1925, is heavily hampered in ways that the public does not understand. He finds himself, if he is a man of intellect, unable to realise his art to his own satisfaction, and he may be driven to examining the elements in the situation—political, social, philosophical or religious—which frustrate his labour. In this uncomfortable pursuit he is accused of 'neglecting his art'. But it is likely that some of the strongest influences on the thought of the next generation may be those of the dispossessed artists.

# A POET AND HIS TECHNIQUE

By T. STURGE MOORE

## I

**M**ONSIEUR PAUL VALÉRY has won acclamation from the finest intelligences in France and possesses perhaps a more enviable reputation than any living poet—one dashed with fewer questionable elements. The beauty of his poems, and the fineness of his critical writings, have plunged me once more into that sea of admiration in which I remember bathing often, but which I had begun to fear never to re-visit. His poetry is admittedly difficult, yet has nothing in common with some of Browning's and Meredith's written in a 'crack-jaw' far less suitable for the Muse than a plain prose style. Uncouthness has always haunted curious thinkers in English verse; Donne, Jonson, perhaps even occasionally in his last phase Shakespeare himself. However curious his thought, M. Valéry never divorces felicity. You read him as the novice reads Swinburne for the sheer pleasure the verses yield, though it may be without a notion as to what he is driving at. But returning and returning, no one admits, as with Swinburne too often is the case, that the import is too diluted with repetitions, the grasp too vacillant, for complete effects, no, with every rehearsal fresh vistas open and moment accrues, while most passages after a third or fourth reading prove completely lucid. The difficulty of Mallarmé or of Rimbaud's latest manner is not essentially akin, and, if superficial resemblances to such violent experimenters remain, these, though inseparable from that magic in which they lie out of reach like flies in amber, appear to me faults.

M. Valéry thinks the poet more properly compared to a hunter than a creator. His is the method of success in war or on the exchange. He runs great risks but pounces on the chance when it occurs; mastery means instant recognition of the quarry and lightning-deadly aim. As the hunter may quit one to pursue a rarer kind of game started by the chase, so, in seeking ever stronger and more euphonious terms, should the poet light on a superior though quite different idea, he will leave the first and pursue the second. This implies that the beauty of the result is his unique object. Loyalty to a chosen theme or to doctrines scientific, philosophic or religious, to which as a man he might feel bound, may have to give place. Such a rule could exclude all narration, drama, or argument, though perhaps M. Valéry has not yet desired to push it so far. Taken as he probably means it, we can imagine that the most perfect poets were actually freest in changing word or idea for those that to the watching soul appeared more musical, more attractive, more able to suspend attention in multifarious wonder. For him a poem is a *charm*, magic words, not only as Keats sighed 'heart-easing' but mind-freeing, capable of enchanting the will and moulding life in despite of both reason and interest, ravishing us above our proper sphere to that on which the Muses and the Graces dance.

Everyone who has studied a few of Keats' stanzas, for which we possess a considerable number of abandoned variants, will perceive that his practice embodied this theory. Though highly prizing beauty, Flaubert grudgingly yielded truth dominance over his prose. Anatole France tended to allow social amenity to govern his, but surely poets should give beauty a casting vote.

In order to bind man's whole nature under a sovran spell, M. Valéry holds that classical form is necessary. It alone is hard and takes high polish, is foreign to the psyche, deaf to her desires, devoid of indulgence, granite,

able to separate all that can exist by itself from all which exists specifically for a single mind. Its characters are the compactness of the whole, an inevitable shape, perfectly engineered stanzas, the least casual vocabulary, all melted into the suavest flow, the most ear-flattering modulations. Prose and free verse are by comparison clay, dull to the ear and mind as that is to the eye, they cannot flash for their surfaces neither reject nor absorb light with decision, they cost less. If classical form exists apart from masterpieces, as he confesses it does, only to reward a master's toil can such unaccommodating elaboration ravish. However, the masterpieces of Malherbe, La Fontaine and Racine were never difficult to understand, though they might still taste more savoursome after the twentieth perusal. Then if M. Valéry conforms to their practice as to shapeliness and euphony, what differentiates his work so strikingly from theirs? He juxtaposes ideas with bewildering suddenness and does not always articulate his phrases according to received usage, as Racine and Keats were careful to do. What can he hope to achieve by this licence he arrogates to himself of being less polite to his reader?

He may very properly plead that the narrow range of Racine's perceptions, confined his art to elegant niceties of address, which were never and are not to-day consciously and fully appreciated by the majority of his readers, who yet find nothing difficult in the meaning of each sentence. He may point out how other races and times have looked for beauty not only in the address, but in the visions evoked—in the freedom and delicacy of emotion, not merely in its reactions to restraint, till poetry has become something that few even of the admirers of Keats appreciate fully and consciously. And we may grant that this art need not be concerned chiefly with how the obvious may be uttered as by royal mask to royal mask, or how the subtle may be put so as to appear obvious to those whom

the minor accidents of life are forbidden to intrude on. Both reader and poet demand that which beauty renders important, whether this be easy or difficult to grasp. Words which astonish by their beauty and the meanings such words elect are supremely poetry. A meaning is poetical when it demands such words, before it will allow itself to be perfectly conveyed. And by Keats this rule is remarkably conformed to, though it rarely was by Racine, for whom it was the social medium, the artificially perfumed air which the discourse must breathe, that insisted on music, suavity and a delicacy of considerateness, which would be futile out in nature.

Still we demur: he who runs may understand Keats' words however little he penetrate beneath. 'Yes,' we may imagine Mr. Valéry to reply: 'but that is because compared with ourselves he is endrawing-roomed, in a poetical arbour, into which nothing which the æsthetic mood considers foreign or trivial is allowed to trespass. But we readers of M. Proust's novel, we who listen to science expounding the structures of the atom, or of a curved universe, we can only pretend or play at being at home in Keats' arbour, as we might in Racine's drawing-room however deeply the beauty of their poems satisfy.' Surely we may grant him this? One of M. Valéry's chief merits consists in treating our modern mental world, which we usually deal with only in abstract language, as though he, the affectionate, sensitive, complete man, were bent on making his muse a real home there, not as though he had merely sent his mind to school and would welcome it back, to a limbo which, though known to be absurd, it was possible to be at ease in. This means a lofty and constant effort, and his poetry reveals the strain in spite of music and glow, by that underlying difficulty in grasping his full intention. Thus I think we may hold excused no little of the difficulty and ob-

scurity by which our admiration of his poems is at first nettled.

Never was poetry so elusive, so content to be misunderstood, and yet so full of import, so smooth and mellifluous. The design of his poems is always their chief beauty. Consider that long rumination of the demon snake in the Tree of Knowledge, 'Ebauche d'un Serpent'. Not only is it a string of stanzas fascinated by the contemplation of Evil, profuse in melody like 'Dolores', but it has a structure and a progress, as our ancient enemy gibes first the sun, symbol of the Creator, who has separated from himself virtue which he can never re-absorb; then Eve, the flesh, the victim is hissed over:

' Je vais, je viens, je glisse, plonge  
Je disparaîs dans un cœur pur!  
Fut-il jamais de sein si dur  
Qu'on n'y puisse loger un songe? '

And lastly science:

' Arbre, grand Arbre, Ombre des Cieux,  
Grand Être agité de savoir,  
Qui toujours, comme pour mieux voir,  
Grandis à l'appel de ta cime, '

And through all three of these deftly proportioned discourses, The Outcast, The Fault, The Shadow is congratulating himself that the defenceless themes of his eloquence, all contribute to nourish his malice deliciously. The lucidity of the language, too, becomes the speaker; for the devil could never wish to be less than naked in his own eyes.

' Beau Serpent, bercé dans le bleu  
Je siffle, avec délicatesse,  
Offrant à la gloire de Dieu  
Le triomphe de ma tristesse. '

' La Pythie ' is an even more beautiful design. In the temple hall the gassed priestess writhes on her rocking

tripod above the fissured earth through which rise mephitic vapours to be made still more poisonous by contact with the golden brazier heated red. She raves of those agonies of creative existence, whereby the candour of youth is changed through operation of a gruesome and afflictive anatomy and through subservience to collective ends not of its own choosing, till it become the poor slave of inarticulate knowledge and incomplete wisdom: while, yet driven beside and beyond itself, it at last serve for mouthpiece to Heaven, when the jocund pontiff listens to a white voice pregnant with the future as it escapes from that tortured and impure body.

‘Honneur des Hommes, SAINT LANGAGE,  
Discours prophétique et paré,  
Belles chaînes en qui s’engage  
Le dieu dans la chair égaré,  
Illumination, largesse!  
Voici parler une Sagesse  
Et sonner cette auguste Voix  
Qui se connaît quand elle sonne  
N’être plus la voix de personne  
Tant que des ondes et des bois!’

And the whole has shaped into an image of the birth of Poetry—in her vexatious and arbitrary yet adorable chains, full of Wisdom, the voice not of an individual so much as of waters and woods, and yet rising out of the sordid degradation of animals in ill-organised societies. I do not recall another French poem so faultless and so pregnant, and in English find no parallel to it, and few of similar length which seem as beautiful.

Such poems are admirably shaped, more so probably than those dazzling short pieces, ‘Palme’, ‘Aurore’, ‘Poésie’, ‘Les Pas’, in which no reader can fail to notice the elegance of composition. The greatest difficulty occurs as a rule where his design demands and excuses it. For the ravings of La Pythie or for the slow return from sleep to full

poetic consciousness in 'Aurore', perfectly articulated language might seem out of place, as in 'Le Cantique des Colonnes', whose conscious plastic beauty asks language to serve sight that our ears may receive the overflow of rapture when the eyes can hold no more. In all these a certain bewilderment of the normal mind is dramatically proper, a too great certainty as to the exact bearing of every phrase would chill and jar. Yet in saying this I seem to overstress the quantity of difficulty such poems contain.

Are any of them more of a riddle than 'The New Syrens' or even than 'Dolores'? Are their tropes more unaccountable than those in 'Meditations on a Gipsy Child by the Seashore', or on 'Hartley Coleridge, six years old', rightly considered as among the prime jewels of our English Muse? Do they not mount at least as near those supreme lyrical successes, 'Ode to a Skylark', 'To the Nightingale', 'To Autumn' and 'To Night'?

But the difficulty of these poems must be considered under another aspect. His admirers agree that in them the symbolist experiment has come full circle and rejoined the perfection of Malherbe, La Fontaine and Racine. This seems to me an unnecessary conception, devoid of æsthetic significance, and only partly true as history. The difficulty, signal in these poems, is abhorrent to the classical ideal, of which lucidity has ever been a prime element, as fulfilling the innate promise and purpose of language, and had for the French classics, on the ground of politeness to the reader, an additional importance which may have been exaggerated, till it encouraged readers to assume it behoved them to be grotesquely rude to poets and poetry.

That the allure of verse, stanza, and the structure as a whole recalls masterpieces by the poets mentioned is undeniable. But as a vehicle of meaning not only would Boileau have been unable to understand M. Valéry's



poems—which would not matter being due to necessary ignorance shared by all men in that age—but could he be educated to our standpoint, he would still, I think, refuse to admit the possibility of many Valérian tricks of composition, with a vehemence which nothing in Hugo would elicit from him, and rightly.

On such a point we get nowhere without examples. The first line of 'Le Cimetière Marin' cannot be certainly understood till the last line has been read.

'Ce toit tranquille, où marchent des colombes,'

The image of the roof is used in a masterly way, not only of the sea but of the surface of the psyche, that which is conscious, which also implies a depth beneath of unexplored twilight and darkness. Life like the sea conceals its secret which may be

'Amour, peut-être, ou de moi-même haine?'

An inscrutability which is the true worm that gnaws the living and leaves the dead alone.

But what about the doves? Not only is the surface of the sea a tranquil roof, but basis for 'le calme des dieux'. What then are the doves that walk it? One rejects white horses, the sea is smooth. One rejects sails, they cannot walk in a calm. One thinks of gulls and of the white smoke of steamers, but suddenly the sea is apostrophised as a sleeping sheepdog and bid keep off from the field of tombs, 'prudent doves, inquisitive angels', that is hopes of immortality and reparation. Thus the doves obtain metaphorical significance, but not until the last line, does one learn what for the poet they imaged.

'Ce toit tranquille où picoraient des focs.'

After all then they were the triangular gibs of ships becalmed, set in expectation of the breeze which has by that time arrived. But an image of doves walking will not serve for any almost imperceptible movement, and when they walked, we were told that sea and air were

motionless. Besides, doves walk with head lifted, so these should advance against, not with the ship; for the uppermost of the three angles leans towards the stern. A landsman's excusable mistake, not a serious fault, yet is it not made inexcusable by being left suspended in this unheard of manner over the whole twenty-four stanzas? I, no more than Boileau, can admit that the reader should be kept waiting for the interpretation of a subsidiary image so long, but surely no one can defend it when in the end it is discovered to be founded on an inaccuracy, a contradiction in terms? Nothing was or could ever be gained by such an antic!

I must keep to cases where proof is possible, I am a stranger and cannot chatter in French; niceties about which two opinions are possible must be left alone. The thoughts suggested by M. Valéry's poetry move in the world of science and geometry, his familiarity with which is amply borne out by his prose writings. His language is, however, marvellously woven of sensuous and spiritual suggestions. This mental background, against which he displays his odes like batik scarves, helped the following lines to baffle me:

‘ Zénon! cruel Zénon! Zénon d’Elée  
M’as-tu percé de cette flèche ailée  
Qui vibre, vole, et qui ne vole pas!  
Le son m’enfante et la flèche me tue! ’

At last, when reading M. Thibaudet's book, I found that he, who has had the advantage of much intimate talk with M. Valéry, ventured to explain. If his grasp is sufficient this difficulty appears also to be due to an implied confusion between M. Valéry's general outlook and that adopted, I suppose for æsthetic reasons, in pursuance of his theory, for this fine stanza.

The reference is, of course, to the famous antinomy between a static conception of matter in which everything occupies a place, its own place, and movement which

demands that an object should come out of the place it occupies into another. The contradiction has been for modern thinkers resolved by the abandonment of a static conception of matter, already used in poetry by Wordsworth:

'No motion has she now, no force  
She neither hears nor sees  
Rolled round in earth's diurnal course  
With rocks, and stones and trees.'

Not only do we conceive of nothing as at rest; for us everything shares in a variety of sidereal motions to which no limit can be set, but more recently we have been familiarized with the conception of solid matter as composed of a multitude of similar motions on an infra-microscopic scale to which we can see no end, while the constitution of the electron, its simplicity or complexity, remains undetermined.

The impossibility for us has become to conceive of anything as stationary or simple. Stability is an exposed chimera. How can this old argument then be cruel to, or kill M. Valéry? Does it?

The 'I' as much as every other appearance, like a wave of the sea maintains identity for some time, though the substance it is shaped of be always changing. Or more strictly speaking it accompanies such a wave, not being as yet identified with any part of its form, and therefore may possibly belong to a quite distinct category, but can scarcely be thought of as stationary in the obsolete sense in which Zeno's contemporaries conceived an arrow to be at rest before the archer loosed the string. The miracle of movement has not been explained but comprises the whole physical world. We know of none save moving matter. M. Valéry often speaks, I have noticed, as though appearances were lies or deceitful in comparison with some substratum of reality.

'Et vous, grande âme, espérez-vous un songe

Qui n'aura plus ces couleurs de mensonge  
 Qu'aux yeux de chair l'onde et l'or font ici?'

This reality, true in a sense that appearances are not, I imagine may be the last lingering ghost of that accepted stability which Zeno mocked at: but why should it haunt M. Valéry of all men in France, the one, we should have supposed least liable to be impressed by so thin a phantom? Stable appearance in an universe built out of movement results from more or less constant sequences. If we think of the almost infinite variety of shadows that an object may cast on all sorts of changing surfaces we can approach this horrible complexity more hopefully: for every shadow has a definite, a recoverable relation to the object. It need not recur, but if the same conditions of light and position are reproduced it will certainly. Similar relations obtain between the parts of an object's appearance and the consciousness it appears to. Though it would present totally different aspects to an animated electron passing through it, yet both the complete sequence of those and that of such as we ourselves could receive are definite and recoverable in this sense, and its reality is for us the source of this observable recurrence. Consciousness cannot observe itself, it has no sensuous appearance but simply is that which is self-recognised as 'I' though invisible, inaudible, intangible, inodorous and flavourless. Every perceiver necessarily being distinct from the thing perceived, the mind's idea of an object can never be true in the senses of *identical with* or *commensurate with* that object; on the other hand appearances always have truth in proportion as they are received, not through abnormal media but from certainly recoverable conditions. M. Valéry enjoys the reputation of being one of the foremost spirits in understanding all these things, the technical discussion of which is far too difficult for me. Why should he talk about Zeno's arrow piercing him? Is this not just the kind of clash in implication that one could

imagine likely to beset those who followed M. Valéry's rule of constantly changing words for stronger or more fascinating ones, and relinquishing the first idea to follow one which promises a richer enchantment. The formal sensuous beauty of his poems gains, but they become difficult to understand, because the implications of the changed phrase or development are often secretly at war with those underlying them. How many of the cruxes which M. Valéry's most convinced admirers still find in his poems may not be due to this cause, or at least in part due to it?

These two may serve for example of how the very riches of his mind increase the danger of M. Valéry's method. Mental poverty might use it with less risk, and safety accrues the moment he makes Satan or Semiramis, the Delphic priestess or the Columns of a ruined temple speak. Their outlook is comparatively narrow and need not be supposed up-to-date. Some inconsistencies are easily granted to them.

There are other causes of his obscurities, the suppression of pronouns, not unknown in English.

'Lo! 'lieth flat and 'loveth Setebos  
'Maketh his teeth meet through his upper lip.'

Or in John Gray's sprightly 'Flying Fish', a poem still too little known though included in Masfield's *Sailor's Garland*.

'Have thought, son Pirate, some such must be  
As the beast thou namest in yonder sea.'

which dispenses with Browning's apostrophe and leaves the verb stark naked as does

'Il dort content, le jour,  
Que chaque jour offrons  
Sur la table d'amour  
Étale sur nos fronts.'

The two English examples are justified dramatically and

well suggest an outlandish idiom, but there seems no obvious reason why columns, if they speak at all, should adopt such a peculiarity; besides this suppression of 'nous', is unique in the 'Cantique' and so cannot mark the trick of an eccentric tongue.

Then there is that musical first line of the book, *Charmes*

'Quelle, et si fine, et si mortelle  
Que soit ta pointe, blonde abeille'

Is the sense in any way enriched by the two first words so unexpected in that position, by the normal French ear? 'Si fine et si mortelle que soit ta pointe' would seem to mean all that is meant. Purport cannot easily be imagined for the initial: 'Whatever else and' implied in 'Quelle, et'.

But these are examples of disputable licences about which I do not dare to come to any conclusion. It has never been quite without uneasiness that I have accepted Mr. Yeats' unusual suppressions of relative or preposition:

'Might sit on there contentedly and weigh  
The joy comes after,'

or:

'I never heard a death so out of reach  
Of common hearts.'

Though these cause next to no hesitation, and may be called elegant. Yet, taken in the light of M. Valéry's defence of strict classical form, must not all such licences appear 'soft' or 'self-indulgent'?

To add an unaccommodating syntax to an unaccommodating prosody is only to transform granite into obsidian, to leave less opportunity for the weakness of the individual psyche to alter or infect that which might exist purely in its own right, without reference to any poet's innocent little ways.

M. Valéry profits with Apollonian cunning by ornamental forms of address. In English he would delight

in 'thee' and 'thou', and our beautiful subjunctive which the insensitive carelessness of modern pens is fast allowing to travel into obsolescence. Assonances and alliterations come as close and thick in his stanzas as in Swinburne's, but without leaping into notice in the same fatiguing way. Their positions and degrees of fulness are more varied.

'Autour d'une même place  
L'ample palme ne se lasse  
Des appels ni des adieux. . . .'

Consider the interrelations of sound between the a's, p's, l's, m's and d's in that; the only syllables without echo are the first two, and there is the sequence *au*, *ou*, *u* to link them. The greater number of defined vowel sounds in French has perhaps prompted poets to accept the *rime riche*, which hardly ever sounds anything but poor in English verse. Our cadences obtain richness from variety of consonants and smoothness from vowel harmonies, whereas French vowels being more varied welcome a more perfect chime in associated consonants. Nevertheless, it is strange that our poets whose language is comparatively poor in rhymes should, in this instance, have adopted by far the more stringent custom.

However, is not 'Before the Mirror' almost a 'Charme' in English? At most the suggestions need only have been a shade subtler and of a more varied range, and the texture a trifle closer. Were one hurried or foolhardy it were tempting to call the superiority in music and suggestion of Rossetti's flight

'Her eyes were like the wave within;  
Like water-reeds the poise  
Of her soft body, dainty thin;  
And like the water's noise  
Her plaintive voice.'

over the most perfect of comparable Swinburne stanzas

all of a wing with many of M. Valéry's. But no, French is too unlike English, and this stanza is simply descriptive in a way which M. Valéry avoids, attempting always a more complex fusion of physical with spiritual suggestions.

'L'or léger qu'elle murmure  
Sonne au simple doigt de l'air,  
Et d'une soyeuse armure  
Charge l'âme du désert.'

These lines about a palm-tree have a more ideal aroma than Rossetti's about a woman and are as provocative of reverie. On the other hand the weddings between words of diverse sensuous categories—the gold which is murmured—the finger of the air—the silky armour which loads the soul—so frequent in so short a period suggests a too conscious ingenuity, so that the French seems less inevitable than the English, or one might say less organic, nearer mechanism, less one with life.

'La plus véritable profondeur est la limpide', M. Valéry has perfectly said; does he not thereby condemn some of his own devices? No pretext outside the shortcomings of the reader's mind, should excuse the charge of obscurity. Some beautiful conceptions are in themselves difficult to grasp or are only exquisite as faint suggestion or by violent juxtaposition. The poet should remove any hindrance to ease which is not essential to the beauty he creates, whether it be the omission of some natural transition, or a freakish departure from usage, or a mannerism which cankers his thought. Is not the eternal enemy of Apollo and his sons, with whom in opposition to Dionysus, M. Valéry has quite definitely ranged himself, Caprice?



# THE MISLEADING COMPARISON BETWEEN ART AND DREAMS

By LEONE VIVANTE

[*Translated by* PROFESSOR BRODRICK-BULLOCK]

## I

**A**LTHOUGH it is possible provisionally to associate art with dreams, nevertheless, from a more comprehensive point of view, it is desirable to avoid doing so, for such connection has been much overdrawn, and there is in it more error than truth.

Since we discern in art a certain spontaneity of conceptions and forms; and since also we are surprised in dreams by a reality that does not consist solely of external things, and which is independent of our arbitrary will: therefore we are led to establish a particular analogy between art and dreams; and we fail to see that the same spontaneity always belongs to thought. This is the mistake: we seek original and forceful realities in dreams and in the subconscious and in the 'unconscious', because we do not see them in the waking state; the deep fountains of life are looked for in dreams, because they are not recognised in the waking state. For instance, reason is not apprehended as a demand of objectivity, or of impersonality, which is original and cannot be replaced by any design or contrivance, but it is conceived of as an external control, and, as it were, a negligible reality of not very deep content, whose problem is solved.—The fact that there is something in our dreams which is not the product of our constructive effort, is not a sufficient reason for associating them with

art, in comparison with every other form of psychic activity.

## II

We may at first glance perceive a feature of resemblance in a certain dependence of the activity of thought on the representative elements, that is, on the material of expression in general, both in dreams and art. In fact, representative elements, I should say, of an occasional nature, which certainly would be overlooked in following practical-rational schemes of logic, play a very great part in the apparent texture of dreams. We find, however, that it is precisely in this respect that art more especially differs from dreams; namely, *in the mode of expression*. And this is all the more apparent, if we follow the interpretation of dreams according to Freud.<sup>1</sup> Not only do we not find in poetry or in any form of art (cf. paragraphs 4 and 7) the ambiguous figures with manifold meanings, the substitutions of persons, the 'disguises', the compound images with contradictory characters, such as we undoubtedly meet in dreams, and which indeed according to Freud and the psycho-analytic school are intimately and inseparably connected with the peculiar nature of a dream (a desire expressed through tortuous ways): but expression in dreams differs from expression in art for a more essential reason, and especially if we are to follow the doctrine of the psycho-analysts—who nevertheless are just the men who seek to interpret art by the light (?) of dreams. It seems that thought in a dream adopts the raw material of our sensations *in its poverty*; that it often gathers up our mental presentments of the waking state such as we already possess, and almost without daring to touch them—in connection with the new concept which is to be expressed: fragments or masses of mental pictures, taken from our preceding experiences and not remoulded, conglomerations

<sup>1</sup> Sigm. Freud, *Die Traumdeutung*. 7th Ed., 1922. [Engl. Transl., *The Interpretation of Dreams*. 9th Reprint. London, 1922].

of presentments whose coherence and adequacy in connection with any meaning vanishes as soon as considered apart from the first illusion. And if we wish to follow the doctrine with which I am here especially concerned, the real thoughts of a dream (the latent dream-content), as a rule, would seem to express themselves only in an indirect and symbolic manner, through a kind of mask; that is, in the apparent texture of the dream, which therefore would all the more appear to be not really *formed* by the dominating thought, not intimately penetrated by it.

Indirect or symbolic expression, when it is merely indirect or symbolic, when the symbol is not modelled intimately and delicately by the idea, but is used only as an instrument to indicate the idea approximately, such expression instead of being art, is its contrary (and in this I state nothing new). In art each expressive moment is woven, so to say, out of night and day, and carries within itself their significance. Each moment exalts and annuls its particularity. Every note carries the eternal and the ephemeral; the form and its intimate, infinite demand. What we discover in poetry, and what constitutes it, is certainly not the practical transitory interest, but the originality and eternity of thought in its values and forms: and these values *are formed in and through the expression*. Contrariwise, to return to what I was saying, it seems that in dreams mental pictures are relatively inert, that they are not spiritualised, that is, they are not (except in a feebleness manner) *active*: and that they have no rhythm. They have an hallucinatory character, as Freud himself agrees. Doubt, in a certain sense, as well as a thousand shades and attitudes of thought or consciousness in the waking state, seem to be lacking to them.

Art and dreams differ then from one another in the mode of expression, because the mental presentments of the apparent texture of dreams show less *activity* and *truth*; and also on account of their alleged symbolic

character. In art a thought *is*, because it forms or realises itself in mental presentments—and therefore in art we *see* the characterising and creative principle, the active vital principle; it is here manifested to us, I believe, more than in other forms of activity. And especially if we follow the Freudian doctrine, we must exclude from dreams that which is the true characteristic of art, namely, *the unity of concept and expression*.

## III

What surprises us as a trait common to poetry and dreams is a certain independence or autonomy both in respect to our will, and, to a certain extent, in respect to every day life and to the happenings of the moment. This correspondence, however, only affords, as I said above, a negative criterion of resemblance.—The truth is that the dream's independence of our will and of every-day life does not prevent its having in general a practical content, volitions and desires, anxiety, distress, and images which are connected with practical activity, often a miserably practical one. We take part in pleasant or unpleasant happenings, we regard as real something desired or feared.—But the cognitive and contemplative spirit, the mental presentment which is a limitless presence, a communion of every one in that truth, a necessity and eternity of aspects—beyond the particular case, beyond that place and time, space and a boundless expanse, the strength of a dominating serene thought: this is but rarely to be found, I think (cf. paragraph 11). We rather meet with anguish and distress, not the presence of a silent immense harmony, which has in the very act its principle and its reality.

## IV

It is asserted that the poet expresses ideas which are disliked by his age and which especially are not conformable to current morality and are repressed in the 'unconscious':

therefore in dreams, as in poetry, it is alleged that we listen to voices which in every-day life encounter obstacles and vetoes, voices which we are obliged to conceal and which thus come to form part of the 'unconscious' (whose extraordinary power they share), and which, being not sought after, are therefore all the more genuine. Ingenious theory! We might answer that, on the contrary, the poet expresses the voice of his age; but to arguments like this it is always possible to reply with other arguments.—The root of the error lies in failing to see the subject which is dealt with, in treating and 'penetrating' it always from an external standpoint, by shunning an intimate view, that is, a knowing *through identification*.

If in dreams the desires—rejected by the consciousness of the waking state—need to disguise themselves and become almost irreconisable, in order that the waking consciousness may not rebel and that in some way they may actuate themselves; if this is not an occult fact but one which we may account for, it is not to be found in poetry or art. And if, as is pointed out, we find it in myths, in a given myth, we do not, however, find it in art, for which the myth is only the subject-matter. We do not find it as a fact belonging to the essence of art.

For there is an obvious error into which those fall who treat of art without having understood—at least in an explicit thought—its value. They fail to perceive that the value of a work of art does not essentially consist in the so-called subject. To read what Freud writes on the *Œdipus Tyrannus* of Sophocles, it would seem that the subject there unfolded ought to move an audience and have an artistic value by whomsoever chosen and developed! The value of art is *in rendering the material intelligible*, in making it a moment of truth, a moment of communion in the *eternal*.

Whatsoever in us has to be referred to remote experiences of men or beasts, to specific instincts, crudely bound to

determined circumstances and stimuli: whatever is most obscure does not constitute poetry; the essence of poetry is intelligibility. Now it is the actual values of life which are intelligible; they are primordial, but above all essential to activity, original, and in a certain sense eternal. And those crude instincts and remote experiences have to be approached and made intelligible by actual values and forms (*actual*, that is, present and active, realising themselves anew), by the perennial motives of love and desire, of terror also and of hunger. We must not suppose that they are truer or more profound, still less that they have a greater artistic value, if we catch them in forms that are less clear and apparently absurd, that is, which have no reason in the demand of being and of individuation, and in other forms and values to us intelligible, in us operative.

Every inclination of ours, every sentiment can be attributed to remote experiences, to primitive experiences of the individual, of the species or of the whole family of living things, and, on the other hand, to original and eternal<sup>1</sup> values; nor would those experiences be conceivable without these values and forms, nor the latter without the former. But in as far as it is poetic vision, every passion of ours, made intensely free, is wholly actuality and intelligibility. Undoubtedly, our whole being is stirred, every fibre of it, and every ferocious instinct, every form of violence, and of blind self-seeking greed; not less than every demand for renunciation or subordination of the particular and the individual: but only in a vigorous and luminous actuality, where every intuition is avidity of form and intelligibility *ex principio*. It is not the material chosen nor the subject-matter, but the actuality or *activity*

<sup>1</sup> I use the term 'eternal' in the same sense as 'intrinsic' or 'essential to activity'. Only the former is sometimes preferable, in my opinion, because it better expresses the value inherent in the same conception. V. My work *Intelligence in Expression*, paragraph 69.

of thought, that is, the reality of thought, which makes poetry. Moreover it is certainly not the best way to find this reality, if we search for unknown strata of the psyche, strata unknown and 'deep-seated' in the sense in which strata of the most distant geological epochs are deep-seated. Reality of thought is *activity* of thought, a present and original realisation, and it is not to be discovered through pursuing this false and one-sided concept of profundity. Thus the psycho-analytic painter who should search for monstrous phantoms in the darkest recesses of the psyche, would not thereby banish—in the best sense, and as far as it is possible—external nature, nor thereby represent (as would be his pretension) the psyche, the activity of thought or psychic activity. He would do this no better than the artists who have imitated external nature. These indeed have represented the internal world and followed the latest doctrine in this connection, when in reproducing, for instance, the self-same Madonna over and over again, and always in the same attitude, they showed by their practice that they did not hold so much to anecdote nor aim at a badly understood object (the so-called 'subject'), but rather were guided by the indwelling vision which is always new. Wherever there is native talent, there we find—whatever be the subject-matter—activity of thought, that is, reality of thought, the creative principle in its wealth, in its power and profundity. I do not wish to dilate on this point: I will only say that these truths escape those who consider the essence of art to consist in an outburst of infancy, of the primitive, of the prehistoric, in a word, of the so-called 'unconscious'. Virginity and innocence are qualities of the pure *form*, that is, of an eternal knot of truths, which calls forth the past into life and renders it present, but which is not the past. And the 'unconscious' (a monster who perceives even in sleep—is someone who speaks to a sleeper; who is credulous, and wears a clumsy bungling expression, in dreams;

in a certain aspect weak, in others formidable)—this 'unconscious' does not explain and does not substitute the originality-necessity of the synthesis, of truth. That is, it does not explain and does not substitute the *actual*—a centre of subtle and powerful realities, in which the past is made transparent and which especially rejoice in the future, almost taking life from it, from the infinite of their own possibilities.

## v

Another false point of view leads to the same alleged connection, and this is the idea that poetry is something unreal and almost an illusion. On the contrary a realistic exigency is the exigency, the content or poetic reality of all higher poetry. Thus the distinction between the practical and the poetic belongs to poetasters, and is characteristic of a poor and mean way of thinking (which knows nothing of any profound subjectivity), as well as of a clumsy romanticism. For the poet, poetry is practical. It is his entire life. It is the will not to exclude, not to forget, but to gather up the real. To him

'Truth more than dreams is dear.'<sup>1</sup>

## vi

It is alleged that poetry, specially on account of a certain prevalence in it of visual images, is a particular manifestation of the primitive life of peoples, and that therefore it must be connected with dreams, both because visual images prevail in the latter and because it is believed that dreams take us back to experiences of the childhood of the individual or of the species. It is hardly worth while remarking that it is by no means obvious that in the case of the so-called primitive peoples—and also in the case of the inferior animals most familiar to us—intelligence is to be found developed in the form of a lively fantastic

<sup>1</sup> A. C. Swinburne, *Poems and Ballads*. II. *A Birth-Song*.



activity, rather than as the rudimentary idea of a practical consequentiality, of a subordination of means to ends, of a quantitative or numerical relation, and of an arid and abstract ratiocination. This subordination of means to ends, according to a relatively arid and voluntary thought, is probably met with among savages just as with us, or even more so; or the contrary has not been proved. Indeed it seems that a certain violence and arbitrariness and lack of grace are characteristic of men, but not of children in their earliest years, nor of the feathered tribes nor of animals in general. And it appears that in our industrial civilisation a certain external, impoverished activity finds a fresh and profitable field and that, as far as it prevails, every material becomes a miserable means or artifice, instead of bearing a delicate impress of life, and every value is relative to another and not original and real. But these are entirely secondary arguments, when we consider what poetic activity really is. It then appears that the onus of the proof lies with those who would make of it a particular function howsoever limited and transient. Images are one with the essentially plastic nature of thought and life: they do not mark a return to primitive forms, but are in fact essential to thought, to its happy inexhaustible realisation. In periods of greater transformation and of higher creative capacity there will presumably be a more lively poetic activity, even in the forms of poetry (in a strict sense), but it is not permissible on this account to make of it a function peculiar to a given phase of development.—And with regard to all distinctions based upon the difference of the expressive material, only the worship of naturalistic laws can persuade us to build up rules on these distinctions and limitations, which are fragile and precarious, as compared with the full force of synthesis or of the meaning: for there is no material which does not sometimes surprise us owing to the possibilities of its meaning; neither is there any thought of vast and difficult

content, the fruit of ripe reflection, which may not surprise us through a new simplicity of the means in which it finds expression.

It is true that Vico represents poetic activity as essentially belonging to the youth of peoples. But, in the first place, it is certainly not in this that the value of his doctrine is to be found, but rather in his having described poetry as an ultimate reality, as an original and eternal aspect or moment of mind. And perhaps, in accordance with Croce, we may consider that Vico's suggestion should not be taken literally, but as a symbolic means of indicating this reality, in face of errors and *lacunæ* which he intended to correct.

## VII

W. H. R. Rivers differs widely from Freud and his disciples in many respects; nevertheless he also associates art with dreams, and insists on the concept of a privileged resemblance between these two forms of activity. The fact is, however, that the arguments which he adduces are somewhat indeterminate, such as make no pretence, as it seems to me, of being exhaustive.<sup>1</sup> Among these arguments the one which is most conclusive is perhaps the following: ' . . . It is also possible,' he writes, 'at any rate in many cases, to show how these images [of the obvious content of a poem] are symbolic expressions of some conflict which is raging in the mind of the poet, and that the real underlying meaning or latent content of the poem is very different from that which the outward imagery would suggest.' There are charades, enigmas, parables in poetic form: but I imagine that Rivers does not refer to these evident instances, which occur but rarely. Moreover, in these cases, what is really poetry does not lie essentially in the fact that we are dealing with a charade or an enigma. Nor it is necessarily found in that which, in

<sup>1</sup> *Conflict and Dreams*. 1923. P. 148.

the enigma, charade or parable, is concealed or not explicitly expressed. Neither do I believe that Rivers refers to the 'hidden wisdom' of words, since this is to be sought in the actual realising of thought, and is inseparable from the appearance, as the principle is from the act, and cannot be discovered behind or underneath the words, now more, now less in conformity with a spatial *schema*, according as the psycho-analysts and in general the psychologists understand 'profundity', in a material sense.

The psycho-analytic writers, as far as I know, do not deliberately consider, do not examine the concept of symbolic expression, of which they make continuous use. Yet it is a question worth discussion and close consideration, whether in dreams (even if we partly follow Freud's interpretation) we are really confronted with *symbolism*, which—if anything is meant by it—implies a distinct subject and a thought or concept having a reality distinct from the symbolic expression. But granting that in dreams the expression is merely symbolic, that is, a *means* in itself deprived of subjectivity and originality (a thing which is not proved and is anything but likely); or granting, with more likelihood, that in them the expression has only a slight originality and independent meaning of its own: admitting this, I repeat that precisely the contrary occurs in poetry. Nor do we understand why—assuming that an 'unconscious' subject must manifest itself stealthily, or that, owing to an internal conflict, it finds no direct expression—this thought or this subject has to avail itself precisely of art and poetry, that is, of forms in which the mental presentments are more than anywhere else *moments of life*, ends in themselves, integral, full, dominant, harmonious, answering to every logical and ethical claim. A greater consistence is rather shown when it is pointed out by the same authors that the mental pictures, in which a definite hidden thought indirectly manifests itself, that is, the mental pictures of the apparent dream-texture, if

considered in themselves, and not *interpreted*, are insufficient, maimed, illusory, false.

## VIII

However, we may understand why to the 'unconscious' are so readily attributed on the one hand poetry and more generally intuition, on the other hand dreams and chiefly psychoses, mental derangements, or, more exactly, certain forms of mental derangements. The 'unconscious' is not so much a scientific or philosophic concept, as a suggestive something, a myth that stands for a reality which we are not prepared to grasp in any other way and to know more adequately (or rather it stands for many aspects of reality).<sup>1</sup> And here in respect to poetry, certainly in some degree, the 'unconscious' stands for the concept and the reality of an originality-necessity which is a reality that cannot be avoided and which we must take into account, even though we do not recognise it. Thus the 'unconscious' is another name for what is commonly called inspiration, which term is more modest, and therefore, under a certain aspect, *less* true; and it is a new name for the Muses. Yet it comes into being from an external and false point of view, which is incomparably less near to the truth than the ancient name of the holy Virgins, who rightly wore the attributes of the eternal. For the concept of an originality-necessity was expressed, and indeed is still expressed and lives in their name; thus there is in it, implicit or explicit, the concept of an activity which is not *absolutely* a derivation, and to whose being is essential a principle of consciousness (a principle of intuitive light, a principle of unity—or of as many aspects of the act of consciousness taking shape or realising itself, as we wish to remember, or distinguish).

## IX

Rivers reminds us, moreover, that there have been cases

<sup>1</sup> V. Note 48 in my *Note sopra la Originalità del Pensiero*.

in which people in sleep have composed poems or other works of art.<sup>1</sup> But since thought's activity is essentially the same in dreams and in the waking state (and this is the fundamental truth—which evidently does not offer in itself a good reason for particularly associating art and dreams), therefore, as I maintain, the cases to which Rivers refers prove nothing contrary to my contention. Perhaps they would prove something if we had to attribute to dreams, in any special way, the merit of important works of art, and contrariwise, if we could show that the waking state is an impotent one; but in general, as far as is known, the works of poetry and art which reach the highest order of excellence are not the products of dreams.

Certain compositions were created, and show every sign of having been so produced, in dreams, or under the influence of narcotics. One of Coleridge's most celebrated odes, 'Kubla Khan', has this appearance, and may be cited as an example. We admire in this ode an intense reality of thought. Certain verses are compact and robust, a perpetual vortex of subtle harmonies, of kinships of meanings and sounds. The vision is full, clear-cut, concentrated. There is an almost palpable substance of thought. But do not these verses recall, even if only distantly, a dense, turgid vision, in which the substance of thought is too thick and too material to reach the height of free art? There is lacking in these verses, as it seems to me, a certain openness and light, a transformation or elevation into a clearer and more transparent thought, a serene and dominating vision, which cannot exist except through the presence of a vaster responsibility, of a watchful love. Therefore that which apparently might or ought

<sup>1</sup> *Op. Cit.* p. 135. Rivers says: 'in sleep', but there is special reference to dreams. Were we to refer to sleep in general (and to the different kinds of sleep, as, for instance, the hypnotic variety), the problem would become much wider, yet in many respects it would remain the same.

to be attributed to the particular dream-condition, or to a similar one, is nowise to be adduced as an element of poetic perfection, and does not bring to the poet's vision the proper value of art. This, however, does not exclude the possibility of the most beautiful visions sometimes lighting up our dreams: it only shows that the originality and real character of art are not *especially* to be sought in the dream-state.

## X

When we consider and recognise as the most probable hypothesis an originality and—therefore—a logical value diffused all through the 'dreaming clay', in so far as it is psyche: when we come to this concept, or if we do not lose sight of it, certain ingenious, flattering theses appear strange, awkward, useless, and quite arbitrary, instead of being luminous. I refer principally to the following: the conceiving of the mental pictures belonging to the apparent dream-texture as not having a meaning or *raison d'être* of their own (the failure to inquire, for instance, if in place of a symbol, it is not possible in a given case to discern a peculiar development of some thought, demand, sentiment, desire, in unusual forms); the regarding the so-called 'censor' as an entity detached from those mental presentments; the attributing to the 'unconscious' the necessary, essential cause of dreams; the assertion that this cause is of quite a different nature from that of the psyche—of that psyche of which we may have some knowledge and to which the act of taking shape or form is essential; the making it into a monster alleged to be 'a-moral', 'a-logical'; and above all the raising of a given formation to the dignity of a law or constant type. For it is not here a question of classifying, but of understanding. In this subject we must not seek for laws in a naturalistic sense, but for intelligible modes of being; not mere universals of fact; not formations which an occult necessity

always presents according to a type, corresponding to an inevitable law, but reasons, whose essence, in the first place, is that they realise themselves according to a vocation or effort, whose measure is not given, and that they may exist now more now less. We are indeed here face to face with facts of consciousness—a reality which in the first place we must know through identification and therefore certainly not by excluding *a-priori*, in what we wish to understand, an originality, an intelligence. And we shall not find any interpretation of the facts of consciousness which does not reflect the want of this notion (except that in a concrete case, in a living thought, such deficiency is corrected); I mean the notion of an originality not bereft of character or of inward truth, the notion of an intelligence which is synonymous with life, a principle of *essential* identification, omnipresent wherever there is activity; constant, and at the same time, through its very nature, constantly new and different. Nearly every interpretation of facts of consciousness carried out in the absence of this concept (which, however, has no need to be learned: it is essentially a plain and simple principle of interpretation offered by common sense)—appears, when viewed in its light, fictitious, secretly longing for the occult or the idol, far-fetched, and above all rigid and fragile.

## XI

The comparison between poetry and dreams, in order to emphasise a similarity of nature between the two, is justified, as I said, at first sight: if for the first time, in dreams, with new and great astonishment, we come upon a reality which does not consist of things belonging to the external world. Therefore, and from this point of view, we may truly say with Shakespeare: ‘. . . we are such stuff as dreams are made of.’ And to point out that art is this reality—and is not, for instance, a simple imitation of

nature—and that there is in it a knot and a development of original truths which no effort of will, no ability, wisdom, initiative or daring can substitute: in this sense the *rap-prochement* between poetry and dreams may be justified. It is to this moderate conception that F. C. Prescott generally holds in his volume *The Poetic Mind*.<sup>1</sup> But on further consideration, when we see that activity (originality) of thought is not only to be found in dreams, and that they in fact do not presumably constitute the place where it is most developed, nor certainly the place where it may best be recognised: when, in addition, we see how and to what extent this concept has been misused, the connection between the two must either be wholly avoided, or considered as secondary and, relatively, irrelevant.

And the comparison does not hold especially in dealing with the type of dreams described by Freud, and according to his interpretation (see paragraph 2). Yet for the reasons which I have hinted at (see paragraph 10), I hold that it is permissible even to-day to refer—if it is desired to pursue this comparison—to another type of dreams, that is, to the dream as it is commonly conceived, such as, for instance, is described by Leopardi ('Il Sogno'), and by Petrarch ('Quando il soave mio fido conforto'; 'Levommi il mio pensier in parte ov'era'). Now as regards these dreams, the problem undoubtedly presents itself (a problem which I do not propose to solve), whether and in what measure the beauty of poetry, that is, poetry, is due to the dream- or to the waking-state; and whether or not the dream-state is capable of so much loftiness and serenity.

It certainly appears to me that, for instance, a vision and a truth, of such a kind as that through which, at the approach of the crisis of his malady, the 'Idiot', of whom Dostoevsky tells us, saw life as *prayer and as beauty*, would overstrain and break the texture of a dream.

<sup>1</sup> New York, 1922.



From a less partial view, we must remember that art represents in human history moments of the greatest *illumination* and *concentration*.

Freud does not admit that in dreams the psychic activity is weakened or in any way *inferior*. Nevertheless, certain characteristics of dreams—and especially those which he himself points out—seem to indicate, in many respects at least, a certain psychic disintegration or decomposition, a certain impotence of synthesis: thus we find a certain one-sidedness in relation to morality, and this is also the case if we consider the mode of expression. With regard to the latter (to sum up what I have said), we find, as it were, a supine acquiescence in the material available, a taking advantage of the material at our disposal, without the need or the power of transforming, of widely remaking it. Or we detect the impress or indication of several conflicting thoughts (cf. Rivers' theory): none of which, as it seems, is capable of gathering up the whole into unity and truth. We must also remember the hallucinatory character of dream-pictures, and also the fact that in dreams examples of lucid recollection of far distant events are frequently met with—for this is memory as a mere retentive power, not memory which is intelligence in an intense degree, and implies interpretation and transformation (as in art). Above all, thought in dreams stops at limits which would be intolerable in the waking state; while, on the other hand, there is no *why*, there is no objection—rendered possible according to the circumstances and the state of culture of a given time and place—to which implicitly or explicitly the verse does not respond, in a plain and simple way. The fable, too, implicitly and harmoniously responds to every *why*. We find a very different exigency of truth, vigour of analysis and objectivity in the spontaneity of poetic thought (unlike that generally occurring in dreams): in contrasts and conciliations of *higher* value. The view which upholds

an inferiority of thought in dreams in general, is discarded too hastily—partly in homage to the divinity of the ‘unconscious’, and partly because the concept of inferiority or superiority, in that it implies value, seems to lack scientific character.

# SIR JOHN DENHAM

*A Conversation between Bishop Henry King and Edmund Waller, at The Palace, Chichester, March, 1669*

By BONAMY DOBRÉE

**W**ALLER: Being to visit some friends at Portsmouth, my lord Bishop, I have turned a little off my road from London to carry you some news, which though it will grieve you, I thought you would rather hear from one who also grieves, than learn from the indifferent words of a stranger or gazette. Sir John Denham is dead.

*King:* The motive was kindly and generous, Mr. Waller. I would another occasion had brought you, for though I did not much know Sir John, the loss of so active, and in many ways beautiful a spirit, must always have something of personal about it. Surely he was not old? Of what distemper did he die?

*Waller:* He was but fifty-four; nevertheless his frame within and without was cracked and bruised, as much by what life had brought him as by what it had failed to bring. The death of his second wife, an event made fetid by the breath of infamy, proved too heavy a blow for a mind unhinged already.

*King:* I had heard of no infamy. Will jealous tongues never stop their wagging, nor a worthy man be left to taste his sadness in solitude!

*Waller:* His wife was young and lovely, over-young, over-lovely, for a Court too dear to me not to wish better than it is. The Duke of York . . . but I need not repeat the kind of idle details too offensively familiar to our ears. My Lady Denham would listen to him on no terms save those of publicity, not wishing to be confounded with the nauseous trapes who flaunt their trains equivocally

in Whitehall. Denham was keenly wounded, all the more for the disparity of years, too well remembering his own past when to outwit an old hushand seemed no crime: and, unlike men sterner or more shallow, he let the wound be seen.

*King:* Poor soul! We have both known, Mr. Waller, what it is fruitlessly to love, you the living, I too passionately the dead. Let us give him our sympathy, for that, I like to think, can never come too late. You smile?

*Waller:* I little thought ever to love a bishop the more for his heresy.

*King:* Such heresy God will pardon, even though Holy Church ought not. But continue.

*Waller:* When Lady Denham died, of a rapid fever, evil tongues bandied the word poison. Some said it was from his hand, others from that of Lady Rochester. So loud was the outcry, that the decent quiet of the obsequies was only procured by the scattering of inordinate largesse to the mob. That honour for the dead should have to be bought from Englishmen!

*King:* His mind, you say, was unhinged?

*Waller:* Before this time, for while the Court was sniggering and giggling over his marital mischance, he bemused himself with sorrow. Going one day latterly to see the quarries at Portland for some free-stone he required for a building, he walked to within a mile or two of the place, then turned about, having forgot the object of his travels. As he came back to London, he passed through Hounslow, when the occupiers of some houses were astounded to see a tall, slightly bent man—you remember his incurvetting shoulders?—stalk slowly into their dwellings and demand rent. The houses had long ago ceased to belong to him. Afterwards he went to the King, and—I hesitate to recount this to your lordship—

*King:* I am not squeamish.

*Waller:* —and declared himself to be the Holy Ghost!

*King:* It is my turn to smile: such things are not recorded in Heaven. The intemperate spirit hidden beneath a sluggish exterior often breaks out strangely. I remember his pale complexion, roughened by the small-pox, his fair hair with its moist curl, and his goose-gray eye, which though it was not large, nor shining, looked into your thoughts with a strange piercingness when he spoke with you. You were, I think, better acquainted with him than I.

*Waller:* I was used to meet him in the Parliament, prior to the Grand Remonstrance; and during the exile in Paris I often saw him at the table I was fortunate enough to be able to keep for our loyal friends. I entered much into conversation with him, and found that his dull demeanour belied his inward wit. He would brood like a mantic owl, as though indifferent to your converse, then would flash out into some sally of wit, or swiftly moulded rhyme, not always, I fear me, too discreet or seemly. When he stood, he towered above you, and his laughter would jerk out like some minor manifestation of Jupiter Tonans, from the clouds. He joined us late, for he had been able, you will remember, to gain access to the Queen, having by some means won the confidence of the infamous gaoler, Peters, and he remained long in England to carry on the cipher correspondence with the Royal Family.

*King:* If I recollect truly, it was Mr. Cowley's handwriting being recognised by the rebels which caused his discovery.

*Waller:* Luckily he escaped, with the Duke of York, whom he disguised as a girl, and who has rewarded him at last! But I must not think of it. He did admirable work in obtaining money from the Scottish merchants in Poland, decimating them, as he remarked in his poem on the subject. It is not among his best writings.

*King:* It has always surprised me that such castigated verse as his could result from an ill-regulated life. His wild gambling at Oxford, his equally wild repentance and

his book against play; his immediate relapse after his father's death into gaming away half his estate, seem a curious distillery for the clear wine of *Cooper's Hill*.

*Waller*: Yet, early in life he translated the *Æneis*, for his 'sluggish exterior' as you have called it, hid not only an 'intemperate spirit', but a constant flame, which broke out flamboyantly indeed, not in his verse, if we except *The Sophy*, but in his pranks. You have heard, perhaps, how one night he tarred over all the signs in Fleet Street with a sweeper's brush, causing chaos and pandæmonium the next morning, and dismay in the hearts of the chandlers, who were far less outraged by the murder of their king than by the blackening of their placards. I would willingly see their puffy carcasses dangling for signs outside their squalid booths.

*King*: Let us try to reconcile in our hearts our late unhappy troubles with the better temper of our fellow-countrymen. Both of us, Mr. Waller, dwelt much among them at the latter end, and saw their innate goodness by little and little overcome the fugitive madness. And Sir John, where did he go after Paris? ^

*Waller*: He too returned, but could barely endure the inaction, for when he could not exercise his faculties he fretted woefully, and I much feared his spirit would o'erleap restraint. It was not his nature to suffer idleness, and where gentle Mr. Cowley could be happy in contemplation, he could only rage in impotence. He was allowed to live unmolested, for he was no soldier, and the rebels were in his debt for Farnham Castle.

*King*: He was too young at the time for so hard a command.

*Waller*: Our tempers then were not yet aroused—I could still sit in the Parliament and say my say—but afterwards, when devilish acts and horrid treachery had incensed every loyal heart and heated us to braver deeds, he might have done more worthily. For it is a hard thing

to kill one's countrymen, however just the cause. Who would be an executioner?

*King:* There were many things, Mr. Waller, which at the time angered me beyond the charity of a Christian; yet they were indeed fiendish things, and were they to occur again, my blood perhaps would boil once more; for, often, to be lukewarm on the side of God is to applaud the Devil. But I must now be very near the period of my days, and from where I stand beside the gates of death, the tumults of life have lost much of their colour and their meaning.

Great as was my horror at the dreadful deeds of the rebels, it has come to me to think that what they did was beyond the dictates of their will. For human passions are like springs of steel, the more you press them back, the further they will leap to overshoot the mark. It is well in times of anger and riot to give way to what men, however foolishly, believe to be the claims of justice, rather than delay until they take by force what at the beginning the wildest of them would not have conceived as allied to fairness.

*Waller:* My cousin Hampden would never have countenanced the death of our saintly sovereign, and Pym himself, though he struck at royalty, would not have struck at that neck. So my cousin Cromwell earned everlasting shame for a deed the foulness of which darkened his own cogitations. Yet, if excess turned us out, excess brought us back.

*King:* You perhaps think, Mr. Waller, that years palsy my thoughts, and that the liveliness of my imagination is clouded with the veil of mortality, but I vow I am less stirred by the deliberate acts of treachery, such as occasioned the murder of Sir George Lisle and Sir John Lucas, than by the wanton acts that defiled our temples. I can forgive the acts of men directed against each other, for alas! blood must pay for blood: but the acts of men

directed against God fill me with loathing yet. To carouse in holy vessels, to prostitute copes to the uses of antic dances, to defile altars with fæces, turn churches into stables, and chapels to slaughter-houses, these are horrors greater than the shedding of noble, virtuous and innocent blood. For the dead have their reward in Heaven; but who can compensate God?

*Waller:* The grass at Colchester, they say, my Lord, will not grow upon the place wetted by the blood of Lucas and Lisle, though the rank herbage sprouts luxuriantly round about. Where nature abhors, should men condone?

*King:* Bitterness is no fitting frame of mind for victors, and I was grieved that the dead were not allowed to lie in peace. We should forget the past and tend the present, for we are not beyond reproach. Were the plague and the fire unmerited visitations? But let us speak of Sir John Denham rather than revive old fevers—and let these funeral offerings of ours not be too sad. He was busied of late, I understand, as surveyor, and his buildings, no doubt, were in conformity with his poetic genius, regular, suave, proportioned with classical grace.

*Waller:* My good friend Mr. John Evelyn told me he was a better poet than architect, but Mr. Evelyn perhaps too much admires that 'miraculous youth', as he calls him, Doctor Christopher Wren. Denham was little curious in the mathematics, but he loved order and restraint, though his mind, unlike Mr. Inigo Jones's, was something too subdued to what he worked in. Yet, for my part, I confess that I do not dislike his Burlington House, though it reveals little of that airy leaven with which he lightened his stanzas.

*King:* He did not write much, I think, during the Rebellion, for indeed, our thoughts were on other things.

*Waller:* Our martyred King discouraged him, and, thinking no doubt, that a nightingale should sing only in the Spring, told him that though he did not mislike



his muse, such things were well enough for youth alone, and that graver men should eschew them for business.

*King:* As you yourself have done, Mr. Waller.

*Waller:* I often wonder if that is matter for praise or blame. It is easy to bustle about the ways of the world, hard to contemplate, and contract one's thoughts into the right span of syllables. Denham was an admirable master of rhyme; he would tolerate nothing superfluous, and his smoothness caused many to deny his solid base. Among the vulgar, cloudiness is often mistook for profundity. He excelled in satire, and showed that the pen, if not alas! mightier than the sword, can be at least as stinging, and can, like a whip, flick without making a wound.

*King:* Satire—and you will forgive my saying this, since I also am among its writers—is not the worthiest object of a poet's hand. At best it can spring from virtuous indignation, and though anger can make good verses, it can never make great ones. Anger builds palings about us such as a poet should ignore. Yet I have often thought that some day a man might arise whose satire would be the outcome of a heart ever bleeding, rather than of a hardened one. Greatly to love a thing is to hate its opposite or the things that threaten its being, and this new satire will be begotten by humility rather than by pride, as is all that of the ancients. For satire too often descends but to petty vituperation, an idle whipping of the cloaca, and I could wish Sir John had not written that *Dialogue* between Killigrew and Pooley, witty as it is: for though perhaps Juvenalian, Juvenal was only great when he ceased to be a satirist. I like him best when his spirit rises:

Ite igitur, pueri, linguis animisque faventes  
Sertaque delubris et farra inponite cultris  
Ac mollis ornate focos glaebamque virentem.

*Waller:* Yet, my lord Bishop, one of the happiest of

Denham's poems is from Martial, and has a concision and surety of touch, a sweet singing note, that would not have shamed Catullus had he writ in English.

*King:* Can you repeat it?

*Waller:* I can quote a stanza which contains more meaning than the unruffled surface would seem to allow. It is the second of the five and runs if I remember rightly:

'Tis not cheeks nor lips nor eyes  
That I prize,  
Quick conceits, or sharp replies;  
If wise thou wilt appear and knowing,  
Repartie, Repartie,  
To what I'm doing.

I do not excuse the occasion of the poem.

*King:* That is very well—but subjects that are merely personal must be treated deeply, as I need not tell you, Mr. Waller. And of the poems of Sir John Denham I would least readily lose the elegy on Mr. Cowley, which, could my old voice do it justice, I would repeat to you for the mere pleasure of doing so.

*Waller:* Pray admit me to the pleasure, my Lord. It is the mind, and not the voice which utters the poetry, that conveys us the music we would hear. Whisper it: your attentive congregation will not lose a syllable: you have not to fill your cathedral.

*King:* I will omit the first part, which smacks too much of history, and the fine rhapsody at the end, which though it be a little forced, fitly closes the poem: nor will I give you the comparison with Virgil, for such things are otiose. But these are the lines I like to dwell on:

Time, which made them their fame outlive,  
To Cowley scarce did ripeness give.  
Old mother wit, and nature, gave  
Shakespeare and Fletcher all they have;  
In Spencer, and in Jonson, art

Of slower nature got the start;  
But both in him so equal are,  
None knows which bears the happiest share;  
To him no author was unknown,  
Yet what he wrote was all his own;  
He melted not the ancient gold,  
Nor, with Ben Jonson, did make bold  
To plunder all the Roman stores  
Of poets, and of orators.  
Horace his wit, and Virgil's state,  
He did not steal, but emulate;  
And when he would like them appear,  
Their garb, but not their clothes did wear.

Those lines I am happy to remember, and often murmur them as I walk in my garden, aromatic with the herbs Mr. Cowley himself sent me, for he had a rare and beautiful knowledge in these matters. But the lines *To the Five Members* I would miss as little as I do the five members themselves.

*Waller*: Indeed he was best on the things that touched him most closely, for though *Cooper's Hill* is a fine poem, an ordered landscape, his longer ones on *Prudence*, *Old Age* or *The Progress of Learning* have none of them so fine a feeling as the lines *On the Earl of Strafford's Trial and Death*. There he earned the interest on the capital he had laid out in reforming our numbers, for even in *Cooper's Hill* there are some things unfitting for a poem. I could never quite stomach his praise of Thames for not being like a mother who overlays her child. His soul did not soar, but he was not devoid of daring, and I think sometimes he sought in his verse for a clarity he could not attain in his life. To profligacy—though he was always temperate—he opposed order, and he loved better to handle the things he could command, than be tossed in passions to which he felt himself victim. Where he could control he swept, where he could not he suffered in silence. But you yourself, my Lord, have done so much

to cleanse our language from imperfections, that I speak under guidance.

*King:* You are too modest, Mr. Waller: it is to you we all owe a debt. Nevertheless, I think that our new way of writing hinders us from saying some of the things my dear friend, Doctor Donne, could write with such glorious perfection of richness. He has always been my master in those of my writings which displeased me least.

*Waller:* Yet who could better this of Denham's on Strafford, so direct, so compact, so full of matter and thought:

Such was his force of eloquence, to make  
The hearers more concerned than he that spake;  
Each seemed to act that part he came to see,  
And none was more a looker-on than he;  
So did he move our passion, some were known  
To wish, for the defence, the crime their own.

*King:* Does it, in its turn, better Mr. Marvell's :

He nothing common did or mean  
Upon that memorable scene,  
But with his keener eye  
The axe's edge did try.

*Waller:* I was not always so true, my Lord, as I should have been in those trying times, but that man is a rebel at heart, a friend of Mr., late Secretary, Milton!

*King:* We are speaking of poetry, not politics: we should never confuse the two. In the one we give form and body to our love, in the other to our hatred. Yet those lines of Sir John Denham, so regular, so antithetical, are to me too much like a game at tennis, where the net is the caesura, and each stroke is neatly returned. I sometimes regret our old, longer way, the carrying of the thoughts over the lines, like waves coming in upon the shore when the second overtakes the first ere the reflux is exhausted. I am sorry you mislike Doctor Donne.

*Waller:* The thought of each age has its fitting measure for use as well as delight: I honour the dead, I cannot wear their dress. We must pay for each gain, and not regret the price. What the future may hold for poetry I cannot see, but the tide has set in one direction, and nothing can check it until it has made high water, to leave upon the shore—what?

*King:* I shall not see it, whatever it may be. The customs and modes of my youth are outworn, but I love them, though I have followed the fashions, and not for fashion's sake alone. But so long as underneath the garb the body is clean and strong, as I pray God from now onward in this our England it may always be, we need not fear for poetry: for it is of the essence of things. Though in different measure, as I think (but love and memory may blind me), the same blood flows in our poets' veins be they called Donne or Denham, Cowley, or Mr. Edmund Waller.

*Waller:* Nothing, my lord Bishop, can give a poet more pleasure than the sincere praise of another, and a better; for even though he feel a slight shame at the receipt of unmerited reward, there is in such words a warmth and a reality which our triumphs in the Parliament and in the field, beneath the coronet or the mitre, seem cold and exiguous, already of that dust to which some day our verses, however good, must unavoidably return. I would that Denham beyond the grave could hear what we have spoken of him, for I would fain be a heretic in your company.

*King:* Goodwill towards the dead can never be offensive to God: and when I trespass, as in the nature of things I soon must, I should be happily comforted to think that your wishes will go with me on my journey.

# SPRING ODE

*By F. S. FLINT*

## I

**W**HITE on its branches  
And again!  
The spring has brought  
The double-flowering cherry  
To its beauty;  
And you too with the spring  
Have blossomed:  
And both are fruitless.

## II

Along the river tracks  
Have rearisen  
The daffodils and white narcissi  
With the golden eyes  
Of pheasants;  
And shall we too, like them,  
Wither  
Down to the grass,  
And, unlike them,  
Be absent  
When the spring calls  
In the year to come?

## III

You can find me in the clouds,  
In the hills, in the winds, in the waters;  
You can see me in the flowers,  
And hear me in the songs of birds.  
Wherever there is beauty is your delight,  
And there am I for you and with you.

Is there then any need of me,  
Of my tired and twisted face,  
Is my body or my mind  
Of use to you?  
When you can love me without them,—  
Not me  
But the notion of me?  
When with this you can go your ways,  
Happy that all beautiful things  
Mean your love  
And your love means all these?

# MORNINGS IN MEXICO

By D. H. LAWRENCE

SATURDAY

**T**HIS is the last Saturday before Christmas. The next year will be momentous, one feels. This year is nearly gone.

Dawn was windy, shaking the leaves, and the rising sun shone under a gap of yellow cloud. But at once it touched the yellow flowers that rise above the patio wall, and the swaying, glowing magenta of the bougainvillea, and the fierce red outbursts of the poinsettia. The poinsettia is very splendid, the flowers very big, and of a sure stainless red. They call them Noche Buenas, flowers of Christmas Eve. These tufts throw out their scarlet sharply, like red birds ruffling in the wind of dawn as if going to bathe, all their feathers alert. This for Christmas, instead of holly-berries. Christmas seems to need a red herald.

The Yucca is tall, higher than the house. It, too, is in flower, hanging an arm's-length of soft creamy bells, like a yard-long grape-cluster of foam. And the waxy bells break on their stems in the wind, fall noiselessly from the long creamy bunch, that hardly sways.

The coffee berries are turning red. The hibiscus flowers, rose-coloured, sway at the tips of the thin branches, in rosettes of soft red.

In the second patio, there is a tall tree of the flimsy acacia sort. Above itself it puts up whitish fingers of flowers, naked on the blue sky. And in the wind these fingers of flowers in the bare blue sky sway, sway with the reeling, roundward motion of tree-tips in a wind.

A restless morning, with clouds lower down, moving also with a larger roundward motion. Everything moving.



Best to go out in motion, too, the slow roundward motion like the hawks.

Everything seems slowly to circle and hover towards a central point, the clouds, the mountains round the valley, the dust that rises, the big, beautiful, white-barred hawks, *gabilanes*, and even the snow-white flakes of flowers upon the dim *palo blanco* tree. Even the organ cactus, rising in stock-straight clumps, and the candelabrum cactus, seem to be slowly wheeling and pivoting upon a centre, close upon it.

Strange that we should think in straight lines, when there are none, and talk of straight courses, when every course, sooner or later, is seen to be making the sweep round, swooping upon the centre. When space is curved, and the cosmos is sphere within sphere, and the way from any one point to any other point is round the bend of the inevitable, that turns as the tips of the broad wings of the hawk turn upwards, leaning upon the air like the invisible half of the ellipse.

If I have a way to go, it will be round the swoop of a bend, impinging centripetal towards the centre. The straight course is hacked out in wounds, against the will of the world.

Yet the dust advances like a ghost along the road, down the valley plain. The dry turf of the valley-bed gleams like soft skin, sunlit and pinkish ochre, spreading wide between the mountains that seem to emit their own darkness, a dark-blue vapour translucent, sombering them from the humped crests downwards. The many-pleated, noiseless mountains of Mexico.

And away on the foot-slope lie the white specks of Huayapa, among its lake of trees. It is Saturday, and the white dots of men are threading down the trail over the bare humps to the plain, following the dark twinkle-movement of asses, the dark nodding of the woman's head as she rides between the baskets. Saturday and

market-day, and morning, so the white specks of men, like sea-gulls on ploughland, come ebbing like sparks from the *palo blanco*, over the fawn undulating of the valley slope.

They are dressed in snow-white cotton, and they lift their knees in the Indian trot, following the ass where the woman sits perched between the huge baskets, her child tight in the rebozo, at the brown breast. And girls in long, full, soiled cotton skirts running, trotting, ebbing along after the twinkle-movement of the ass. Down they come, in families, in clusters, in solitary ones, threading with ebbing, running, barefoot movement noiseless towards the town, that blows the bubbles of its church domes above the stagnant green of trees, away under the opposite fawn-skin hills.

But down the valley middle comes the big road, almost straight. You will know it by the tall walking of the dust, that hastens also towards the town, overtaking, overpassing everybody. Overpassing all the dark little figures and the white specks that thread tinily, in a sort of underworld, to the town.

From the valley villages and from the mountains the peasants and the Indians are coming in with supplies, the road is like a pilgrimage, with the dust in greatest haste, dashing for town. Dark-eared asses and running men, running women, running girls, running lads, twinkling donkeys ambling on fine little feet, under twin great baskets with tomatoes and gourds, twin great nets of bubble-shaped jars, twin bundles of neat-cut faggots of wood, neat as bunches of cigarettes, and twin net-sacks of charcoal. Donkeys, mules, on they come, great pannier baskets making a rhythm under the perched woman, great bundles bouncing against the sides of the slim-footed animals. A baby donkey trotting naked after its piled-up dam, a white, sandal-footed man following with the silent Indian haste, and a girl running again on light feet.

Onwards, on a strange current of haste. And slowly rowing among the foot-travel, the ox-wagons rolling solid wheels below the high nets of the body. Slow oxen, with heads pressed down nosing to the earth, swaying, swaying their great horns as a snake sways itself, the shovel-shaped collar of solid wood pressing down on their necks like a scoop. On, on between the burnt-up turf and the solid, monumental green of the organ cactus. Past the rocks and the floating *palo blanco* flowers, past the towsled dust of the mesquite bushes. While the dust once more, in a greater haste than anyone, comes tall and rapid down the road, overpowering and obscuring all the little people, as in a cataclysm.

They are mostly small people, of the Zapotec race: small men with lifted chests and quick, lifted knees, advancing with heavy energy in the mist of dust. And quiet, small, round-headed women running barefoot, tightening their blue rebozos round their shoulders, so often with a baby in the fold. The white cotton clothes of the men so white, that their faces are invisible, places of darkness under their big hats. Clothed darkness, faces of night, quickly, silently, with inexhaustible energy advancing to the town.

And many of the Serrao, the Indians from the hills, wearing their little conical black felt hats, seem capped with night, above the straight white shoulders. Some have come far, walking all yesterday in their little black hats and black-sheathed sandals. To-morrow they will walk back. And their eyes will be just the same, black and bright and wild, in the dark faces. They have no goal, any more than the hawks in the air, and no course to run, any more than the clouds.

The market is a huge roofed-in place. Most extraordinary is the noise that comes out, as you pass along the adjacent street. It is a huge noise, yet you may never notice it. It sounds as if all the ghosts in the world were

talking to one another, in ghost-voices, within the darkness of the market structure. It is a noise something like rain, or banana leaves in a wind. The market full of Indians, dark-faced, silent-footed, hush-spoken, but pressing in in countless numbers. The queer hissing murmurs of the Zapotec *idioma*, among the sounds of Spanish, the quiet, aside-voices of the Mixtecas.

To buy and to sell, but above all, to commingle. In the old world, men make themselves two great excuses for coming together to a centre, and commingling freely in a mixed, unsuspecting host. Market and religion. These alone bring men, unarmed, together since time began. A little load of firewood, a woven blanket, a few eggs and tomatoes are excuse enough for men, women and children to cross the foot-weary miles of valley and mountain. To buy, to sell, to barter, to exchange. To exchange, above all things, human contact.

That is why they like you to bargain, even if it's only the difference of a centavo. Round the centre of the covered market, where there is a basin of water, are the flowers: red, white, pink roses in heaps, many-coloured little carnations, poppies, bits of larkspur, lemon and orange marigolds, buds of madonna lilies, pansies, a few forget-me-nots. They don't bring the tropical flowers. Only the lilies come wild from the hills, and the mauve red orchids.

'How much this bunch of cherry-pie heliotrope?'

'Fifteen centavos.'

'Ten.'

'Fifteen.'

You put back the cherry-pie, and depart. But the woman is quite content. The contest, so short even, brisked her up.

'Pinks?'

'The red ones, señorita? Thirty centavos!'

'No. I don't want red ones. The mixed.'

'Ah!' The woman seizes a handful of little carnations

of all colours, carefully puts them together. 'Look, señorita! No more?'

'No, no more. How much?'

'The same. Thirty centavos.'

'It is much.'

'No, señorita, it is not much. Look at this little bunch. It is eight centavos.'—Displays a scrappy little bunch. 'Come then, twenty-five.'

'No! Twenty-two.'

'Look!' she gathers up three or four more flowers, and claps them to the bunch. 'Two *reales*, señorita.'

It is a bargain. Off you go with multi-coloured pinks, and the woman has had one more moment of contact, with a stranger, a perfect stranger. An intermingling of voices, a threading together of different wills. It is life. The centavos are an excuse, to these Indians.

The stalls go off in straight lines, to the right, brilliant vegetables, to the left, bread and sweet buns. Away at the one end, cheese, butter, eggs, chickens, turkeys, meat. At the other, the native-woven blankets and rebozos, skirts, shirts, handkerchiefs. Down the far-side, sandals and leather things.

The sarape men spy you, and whistle to you like ferocious birds, and call 'Señor! Señor! Look!' Then with violence one flings open a dazzling blanket, while another whistles more ear-piercingly still, to make you look at *his* blanket. It is the veritable den of lions and tigers—that spot where the sarape men have their blankets piled on the ground. You shake your head, and flee.

To find yourself in the leather avenue.

'Señor! Señor! Look! Huaraches! Very fine, very finely made! Look, señor!'

The fat leather man jumps up and holds a pair of sandals at one's breast. They are of narrow woven strips of leather, in the newest Paris style, but a style ancient to these natives. You take them in your hand, and look at

them quizzically, while the fat wife of the huarache man reiterates: 'Very fine work. Very fine. Much work!'

Leather men usually seem to have their wives with them.

'How much?'

'Twenty reales.'

'Twenty!'—in a voice of surprise and pained indignation.

'How much do you give?'

You refuse to answer. Instead, you put the huaraches to your nose. The huarache man looks at his wife, and they laugh aloud.

'They smell,' you say.

'No, señor, they don't smell'—and the two go off into fits of laughter.

'Yes, they smell. It is not American leather.'

'Yes, señor, it is American leather. They don't smell, señor. No, they don't smell.'—He coaxes you till you wouldn't believe your own nose.

'Yes, they smell.'

'How much do you give?'

'Nothing, because they smell.'

And you give another sniff, though it is painfully unnecessary. And in spite of your refusal to bid, the man and wife go into fits of laughter to see you painfully sniffing.

You lay down the sandals and shake your head.

'How much do you offer?' reiterates the man, gaily.

You shake your head mournfully, and move away. The leather man and his wife look at one another and go off into another fit of laughter, because you smelt the huaraches, and said they stank.

They did. The natives use human excrement for tanning leather. When Bernal Diaz came with Cortes to the great market-place of Mexico City, in Montezuma's day, he saw the little pots of human excrement in rows for sale,

and the leather-makers going round sniffing to see which was the best, before they paid for it. It staggered even a fifteenth-century Spaniard. Yet my leather man and his wife think it screamingly funny that I smell the huaraches before buying them. Everything has its own smell, and the natural smell of huaraches is what it is. You might as well quarrel with an onion for smelling like an onion.

The great press of the quiet natives, some of them bright and clean, many in old rags, the brown flesh showing through the rents in the dirty cotton. Many wild hillmen, in their little hats of conical black felt, with their wild, staring eyes. And as they cluster round the hat-stall, in a long, long suspense of indecision before they can commit themselves, trying on a new hat, their black hair gleams blue-black, and falls thick and rich over their foreheads, like gleaming bluey-black feathers. And one is reminded again of the blue-haired Buddha, with the lotus at his navel.

But already the fleas are travelling under one's clothing.

Market lasts all day. The native inns have great dreary yards with little sheds, and little rooms around. Some men and families who have come from far, will sleep in one or other of the little stall-like rooms. Many will sleep on the stones, on the earth, round the market, anywhere. But the asses are there by the hundred, crowded in the inn-yards, drooping their ears with the eternal patience of the beast that knows better than any other beast that every road curves round to the same centre of rest, and hither and thither means nothing.

And towards nightfall the dusty road will be thronged with shadowy people and unladen asses and new-laden mules, urging silently into the country again, their backs to the town, glad to get away from the town, to see the cactus and the pleated hills, and the trees that mean a village. In some village they will lie under a tree, or under a wall, and sleep. Then the next day, home.

It is fulfilled, what they came to market for. They have sold and bought. But more than that, they have had their moment of contact and centripetal flow. They have been part of a great stream of men flowing to a centre, to the vortex of the market-place. And here they have felt life concentrate upon them, they have been jammed between the soft hot bodies of strange men come from afar, they have had the sound of stranger's voices in their ears, they have asked and been answered in unaccustomed ways.

There is no goal, and no abiding-place, and nothing is fixed, not even the cathedral towers. The cathedral towers are slowly leaning, seeking the curve of return. As the natives curved in a strong swirl, towards the vortex of the market. Then on a strong swerve of repulsion, curved out and away again, into space.

Nothing but the touch, the spark of contact. That, no more. That, which is most elusive, still the only treasure. Come, and gone, and yet the clue itself.

True, folded up in the handkerchief inside the shirt, are the coppers, centavos, and maybe a few silver pesos. But these, too, will disappear as the stars disappear at daybreak, as they are meant to disappear. Everything is meant to disappear. Every curve plunges into the vortex and is lost, re-emerges with a certain relief and takes to the open, and there is lost again.

Only that which is utterly intangible, matters. The contact, the spark of exchange. That which can never be fastened upon, forever gone, forever coming, never to be detained: the spark of contact.

Like the evening star, when it is neither night nor day. Like the evening star, between the sun and the moon, and swayed by neither of them. The flashing intermediary, the evening star that is seen only at the dividing of the day and night, but then is more wonderful than either.



# DEFENCE OF THE WEST

By HENRI MASSIS

[*Translated by F. S. FLINT*]

## II

‘PUT a Russian desire under a fortress,’ said Joseph de Maistre, ‘and it will blow it up’. And Michelet himself was alarmed at the power for destruction of a nation so badly trained among the human races. ‘When it is said that one of the West is a doubter, a sceptic,’ he wrote in 1863, ‘it is never absolutely true. A man may be a sceptic in history who is a firm believer in chemistry or physics. Here everyone believes in something; the soul is never empty. But in this Russian world, ignorant, barbarous, kept empty of mind and becoming so by tradition, if this state were to last, if man were once to start down the slope of doubt, there would be nothing to stop him, nothing to act as a counterpoise or balance; we should have the terrible spectacle of a populace without ideas, principles or feelings; a people who would march towards the West with a blind movement, having lost its soul and will, striking at random, like a fearful automaton, like a dead body galvanized into action that strikes and can still kill.’ The frontier of the world of Law is where it was in the Middle Ages, on the Vistula and the Danube. . . . When we admit Russia, we admit cholera, dissolution, death. ‘What, O philosopher,’ remonstrates in its softest voice the young Russian school that flourishes in our reviews, ‘you set yourselves apart from your brothers! Where is your philosophy?’ Such is Russian propaganda, infinitely varied according to the peoples and countries. Yesterday, it said: ‘I am Christianity.’ To-morrow, it will say: ‘I am Socialism.’

To-day, going back to its origins, Russia is turning towards the East, that East whose instincts she has inherited from her rude Tartar masters, and kept alive by the contact of centuries; and it is to say to these peoples, who are well-fitted to understand her: 'Russia stretches out her hand to Asia, not for her to embrace her ideal, nor for her to share her social conceptions, but because she needs eight hundred million Asiatics to fight European imperialism and capitalism.' These words of Zinoviev, the President of the Committee of the Third International, at the Baku Congress in 1920, are merely a commentary on the famous phrase of Lenin: 'Let us turn towards Asia; we shall overcome the West by way of the East.'

But in Asia the Bolsheviks pose as idealists, mystics and liberators. In secret, they dream of giving an overlord to these Asiatic peoples, in whom there is an inarticulate desire for unity; and, in the *Moscow Orientalist Review*, *Novii Vostok* (*The New East*), may be read: 'Recently Russia has taken the name of Eurasia, and this new Russia is above all the master and guide of the East, which is groaning in the chains of moral and economic slavery, and which is struggling for a better future. Moscow is the Mecca and the Medina for all these subject peoples.'

And by the paths followed in the past by 'the soldiers and *tchinovniks* (bureaucrats) of the Czar, pioneers and organisers of another kind are penetrating to-day into Persia, India, China, Japan, Korea and the Near East.' They bring with them or find on the spot, the experimental formula of organisation suited to their scheme: 'to fertilise the latent nationalism of these Asiatic communities subject to foreign dominations and for long rendered immune against any outside germ, but which, having arrived at a certain point of decadence, are in that state of expectation, of prophetic, messianic and millennial exaltation, which is the precursor of great migratory movements, and which has been excited by the universal upheaval of the war.'

The period foretold by Renan seems at hand, when the Slav, like the dragon of the Apocalypse, whose tail swept a third part of the stars, will drag in his train the masses of Central Asia, the old following of Gengis Khan and Tamerlaine.

While Bolshevism is thus preparing to reopen the old roads of invasion that have been closed for many centuries, Germany is in a mood of anxious questioning. Will she ally herself with Soviet Russia, or try again to find her stay in the West? These two tendencies in turn tempt an identical nationalism. But as the internal recovery of Germany advances, she looks less and less to Asia. Asiaticism, which was characteristic of her mental depression, was never so flourishing as at the time of the worst collapse of the mark. But even those of her thinkers who are inclining her towards Asia are preparing the way for a realistic policy of Germano-Slav domination. Germany intends to remain Occidental in the measure of her belief that she possesses a genius for organisation. She feels that she is fitted to become again the permanent conscience of the world (*das dauernde Weltgewissen*), or at least the centre of gravity of the East. For if she thinks that the axis of Europe is going to shift, she conceives of herself as the magnetic pole of the Slav and Asiatic peoples, as the initiator of the 'Russian civilisation' prophesied by Spengler. And did she not, even at the height of her despair, dream of becoming the Rome that should discipline the Neo-Messianism of the East, the capital of that vast Eurasia which would unite the east of Europe to the Asiatic steppes, excluding entirely the overthrown Latin races? On this last point, Germanism and Russian Asiaticism are in agreement; and it is here that they are a danger of the same kind for the future of civilisation.

Such an agreement is in a way in the nature of things. Astonishment has often been expressed at the extreme favour that Protestantism enjoys among the Orthodox,

when it should have been as hated on the Neva as it is on the Tiber.<sup>1</sup> It is because all isolated communities are at one in their hatred of united Catholicism. Thomas Mann quotes with praise the passage in which Dostoevsky shows that Germany is a living protest against the Latin civilisation imposed by the Roman Empire on Western Europe—and this since the victory of Hermann over the legions of Varus. 'Although', he says, 'the Germans have never given voice to their own ideal and doctrine, in order to substitute their positivity for the old Roman idea they have shaken, I believe that one day they will be in a position to say this word, radiantly new, and in so doing, decisively to take the lead of a higher humanity. At the time of the Lutheran Reformation, the voice of God thundered through them over the world to announce the liberation of the mind. The formula of protest had been found, though it remained negative and although the positive liberating word had never been said.'<sup>2</sup>

In this spiritual war that it has declared on the human race, the Russo-Bolshevist idea should find in the German idea a sort of pre-established complicity, of secret connivance, a same basis of permanent hostility to the principles of Latin civilisation. Germanism, Slavism; it is at these common sources that all that is in revolt against the eternal order takes its strength. It is at their contact that all the old Asiatic heresies, which are always ready to revive as soon as the solidarity of Europe is threatened, are galvanised into action and awaken their slumbering forces.

How comes it that on the plea of promoting the 'fusion of minds of the East and the West', the messengers from Asia, the Tagores, the Okakuras, Ghandi himself, find themselves in agreement with all the most destructive elements in European doctrines? It is clear that they

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Joseph de Maistre: *Du Pape*, and *Lettres à une dame russe*.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted by Ernest Seillière in his study of Thomas Mann (*Les Pangermanistes d'après-guerre*).

know where the breaches are, and are seeking for the lines of least spiritual resistance in order to find their way into the dissociated body of the West. This passage from Kokuzo bears clear witness to this; we see in it how the Eastern nationalists, formed, moreover, in our own universities, make use of the ways of approach offered by what Amanda Cooromeswamy calls 'the religion of modern Europe', the *religion of idealistic individualism*: 'Our mission', he says, 'does not consist merely in returning to our own ancient ideal, but also in feeling and reviving the dormant life of the former unity of Asia. The sorry problems of Western society urge us to seek in Indian religion and in Chinese ethics for a higher solution. *The tendencies of Europe, as shown in German philosophy and Russian mysticism, are turning towards the East, and help us in investigating the more subtle and more noble aspects of human life, which will carry these nations themselves nearer the stars in the night of their material surrender.*'<sup>1</sup>

German philosophy, Russian mysticism, these are the roads chosen, reconnoitred in advance; idealism,<sup>2</sup> the mask that these Oriental nationalists borrow, in order the better to allure us, the better to make themselves understood. They are working with our own ideas in order to turn them against us. They use grand words taken from our liberal vocabulary in order to lay claim to things which we have created and which are absolutely foreign to them. As Chesterton says: 'I sympathise with people who demand simple things and ask for their temple, their land, their money, but when they become pedantic and demand things that come out of a European textbook, I call it impudence.'

But these spiritual notions are in fact aimed at the

<sup>1</sup> Okakura: *Les Idéaux de l'Orient*.

<sup>2</sup> 'To capture them by idealism,' said Lenin in describing his propaganda among the youth of Europe.

annihilation of the West. Amanda Cooromaswamy, in the *Dance of Giva*, quotes the 'remarkable words' of Viscount Borio: 'Equality in peace can never be attained, until it is built up on the ruins of the vanished Western states.' One of the founders of the Oriental League of Tokio, M. Ikuta Choko, to whom Japan is indebted for a translation of Nietzsche, wrote some time ago: 'Western civilisation, sunk in materialism . . . is on the eve of shipwreck. Our League will have no *raison d'être* unless it undertakes to renew the life of humanity. Our task is once again to *orientalize the world*.' And in the manifesto of the League, we read: 'Peace and happiness will not be assured to men until Asia conquers the Whites, not driven to it by hate, but merely by the thought of bringing them back to justice, to true civilisation, which is spiritual and not material.'

But the hatred is not far away, and I will quote these words of Count Okuma, the creator of a Japanese association with the object of drawing India into the orbit of Japanese imperialism: 'By marching on the West,' he says, 'against the Balkans, France, and Italy, the greater part of the world may be brought under our sway. The tyranny of the Anglo-Saxons at the Peace Conference filled gods and men with rage.' Asiatic intellectuals, like Kawakami content themselves with announcing 'the coming day that will give to Asia, in the matter of civilisation, a superiority that will throw Europe into the shade'.

A very definite political realism is, in fact, hidden under this idealist propaganda. They are working for the formation of a Greater Asia by a Sino-Japanese alliance. 'Russo-Japanese friendship,' wrote a Japanese statesman, Viscount Goto, a few months ago, 'is the key of this alliance; it will harmonise the civilisations of the East and West. A Russo-Sino-Japanese *entente* will establish peace in the Pacific on the basis of liberty and equality.' The Russo-Japanese agreement was signed on 20th

January, 1925. As M. Maurice Muret rightly observes in his book, *The Twilight of the White Nations*,<sup>1</sup> only necessity could have forced a nation as devoted as Japan to her monarchical and aristocratic institutions to expose herself to the dangers of an alliance with the Soviets. For that matter, it was under the pressure of hard necessity that Japan took that step. She was afraid of isolation. Abandoned by England, her ally in the war, cut off from the United States, who closed the door against her by the Emigration Act—which has justly been called the greatest possible international error, the most pregnant with terrible consequences that has been committed since the Peace—Japan had to look for friends elsewhere. The alliance with the Soviets saved her from isolation, under particularly favourable conditions, if the diplomatic activity shown by Russia in Central Asia and the Far East is remembered. Thus Japan, who westernised herself against her will, is thrown back on Asia; Russia, cut off from Europe, is also thrown back on Asia. At the two extremities of this mysterious world, a colossal reservoir of human beings, two more advanced in the path of technical progress look to each other and plan to conquer it.

The signing of the Russo-Japanese treaty caused particular rejoicing in Moscow. Tchicherin declared to one of the staff of *Izvestia*: 'This treaty is the signal for an essential change-about in the Far East and also in international politics.' And M. Stickloff announced in regard to it that 'a new era was beginning in the history of the world, an era that would be marked by the coming alliance of Japan, Russia, China, and Germany.' There is an attempt to form a Germano-Asiatic *bloc*, but the action of the Soviets is the leaven of this Asiatic world that has evolved so marvellously in five years. The reason is that the Soviets, as seen from the East, look like an Asiatic reaction against European civilisation. The East

<sup>1</sup> Paris, Payot, 1925.

greet and loves the Soviets less for what they bring than for what they destroy. It sees in them the factor that will humiliate and crush the masters under whose 'oppression' they have suffered so long.

Such are the facts, such is the reality that is hidden in the Bengalee poetry of a Tagore, the Tolstoyan gospel of a Gandhi. When the propagandists of the 'Knowledge of the East' are working to revive Eastern culture and thought, to denounce the destructive spirit of the civilisation of the West, they are furthering the plans of a political coalition that may give rise to a conflict more inhuman than all the others, and that would plunge the universe into the abyss once more. It is doubtless some such anticipation that intoxicates M. Romain Rolland when he writes: 'As an historian by trade, accustomed to watch the great tides of the mind ebb and flow, I describe this one that is rising in the depths of the East. It will not ebb till it has overflowed the banks of Europe' (Preface to the *Young India*, by Ghandi). And in another passage, he adds: 'Asia will conquer us as Rome and Athens once conquered, by the *mind*.'

On the plea of welcoming 'the ample and calm metaphysic' of India, its conception of the Universe, its wisdom of life, the breach through which an anarchy, no less barbarous than invasions, will flow, dissolving our institutions and our customs, is being opened and enlarged. The word so far, in idealistic language, is only of a sort of spiritual invasion ready to roll in on us from the high plateaux of Asia to 'regenerate' the races of the West, abandoned in the evening of their ill fate. We must not wait until the 'storms longed for' by some European deserters have destroyed our world, before denouncing those who have become the accomplices of this Asiaticism. We must first attack those who are propagating these ideas among us. It is in the West that we must first look for the ideologists who, on the pretence of opening up to



us the ideas of the East, are betraying civilisation, and their own vocation. These are the real fosterers of the crisis in Western thought, and, to put it bluntly, in thought itself.

. . . . .  
 'The spirits thou dost summon up,  
 Thou shalt not lose them evermore.'

*Goethe.*

Ideas have their responsibilities no less than men have; and, as Barbey d'Aureville said: 'All philosophy passes into facts; the most lofty speculation has its feet in the practice of life; principles guide men, even the lowest of them, by a chain of logic on their necks.'

Among all the subversive forces that are undermining Europe, ideas too generate events, which follow closely after the body of ideas that covers them, this, indeed, opening up the way for them, increasing their fatal violence and multiplying their dangers. The object is to disarm mind and energy before the imminent march of events. We have seen the sources; we still have to discuss the main themes of the fallacious doctrines hiding under the mask of a vague Orientalism. For notwithstanding the strange motives that these doctrines find in the endless varieties of Hindoo, Buddhist, Confucian and Taoist metaphysics, where all and everything may be found, these pseudo-Asiatic ideas would certainly not exist if they were not in a way galvanised into life by contact with Western heresies, mainly of Germanic or Slav origin.

First of all, this anti-Western propaganda may be recognised by the fact that it takes advantage of the disorder in Europe, of the state of lassitude that follows great upheavals, in order to keep up in us the idea of our deterioration and decline. Europe, which has now hardly any other education than the ruin of her memory, is only too ready to yield to the baleful wail of this historic fatalism to which Hindoo pessimism adds the progressive

mirage of cycles of thousands of years. To-day, Europe feels only as a burden on her will and her soul all those former civilisations that the erudition of the nineteenth century evoked from the past of humanity, but that she cannot harmonise in her mind. Hence this need of novelty that torments her. She worships change only because she feels bowed beneath the weight of weariness of the whole universe. At the time when she needs to expend all her energies in the defence of the eternal principles that are the foundation of civilisation, the mass of her historical memories overwhelms her and prevents her from reacting in the direction of preservation and life.

Does Europe still hold the 'secret of civilisation'? She asks herself the question, and doubt seizes her as she meditates despairingly on the zenith and decay of vanished races. Revolutions and reconstructions have confirmed her in the weakening belief that there is always something perpetually in course of surrender; and already she is consoling herself with the thought that the 'slaughter of one is the nourishment of another in this movement of natural cannibalism that varies so little from century to century.' And in face of this Asiatic menace with which we are dealing, are there not people who say to themselves like the aged Renan: 'There is no doubt that these peoples will bring new ideas to humanity. This will not be accomplished without great disturbance in the general sequence of events. But the Barbarians also somewhat disturbed society in the fourth century, and there is no doubt that humanity is indebted to them for much'? That is the point of view of Sirius, the mental *débâcle* of humanity ready to surrender. As Chesterton says: 'The man who is fighting for his country is never haunted by the refrain of vanished empires.' And history teaches us other things besides scepticism; it shows us that the only man to perish is he who neglects the conditions of all life and all liberty, the permanent rules of safety and the

means of defence: history also brings into evidence what has been rightly called the *law of the rampart*.

Another theme from these doctrines of dissolution which they are trying to acclimatise among us under cover of Asiaticism, is that of the materialism of Western civilisation. We hear of the 'dissimulation' of Europe, to which our enslavement to material power of necessity inclines us, and we are offered Buddhism or Hindooism as a counterpoise that will save us from being drawn into the abyss. Before the gloomy spectacle of Europe as we see it to-day, no one could dream of bringing forward in her favour the homicidal benefits of her puny mastery over matter; and when we desire to defend the West against its detractors, it is not our aim to apologise for its defects, its excesses, its surrenders, but to restore the essential principles, the true traditions of our civilisation, that may save it and the human race with it. We have need to find ourselves again and not to lose ourselves. If as an aid to this necessary recovery, we expect nothing from Asia, it is because the pseudo-Orientalism of its defenders is most often only an exotic form of the return to nature, of the 'Rousseauism' that, with progressive intentions, has led to a general retrogression. It is the same distrust of civilisation, the same hatred of society and of law. Rabindranath Tagore denounces the misdeeds of Western machinery and technique in the same tone in which Rousseau condemned the corruption of Athens, the decadence of Rome, the humanism of the Renaissance, in order to exalt the Scythians, the Early Persians and the Germans of Tacitus. We find in the Asiatic propagandists and the Genevese philosopher the same wild declamations against the progress of industry, which is condemned not for its excesses, but for itself, in the name of virtue and primitive simplicity. And this vague 'naturism' that exploits the discontent of the modern soul, in order to rouse all human propensities against the defects of our

organisation, clothes itself in a spurious theosophism, that is as foreign to Hindoo metaphysics as to ancient Chinese ethics.

This is the teaching, for example, of the last books of Maurice Maeterlinck. Everyone knows his famous contrast between what he calls the Western and the Eastern lobes of the human brain: 'The one', says the author of the *Unknown Guest*, 'produces here reason, science and consciousness; the other secretes yonder intuition, religion and sub-consciousness. The one reflects only the infinite and the unknowable; the other is interested only in what it can limit, what it can hope to understand. They represent in an image that may be illusory, the struggle between the material and moral ideals of humanity. They have more than once tried to penetrate each other, to mingle, to work in harmony; but the Western lobe, at least over the most active part of our globe, has up to the present paralysed and almost destroyed the efforts of the other. We owe to it not only our extraordinary progress in all the material sciences, but also catastrophes such as we are experiencing to-day, which, unless we take care, will not be the last nor the worst. It is time', Maeterlinck concludes, 'to rouse the paralysed Oriental lobe.' And thereupon he elaborates for our use a sort of occult syncretism, that is not only a danger to the Christian faith, but that threatens the dissolution of the reason in its most fundamental aspects, that gives rise to fears, in a not very remote future, of disorders in the 'religious consciousness' of which the gnostic and neo-platonic aberrations at the beginning of our era offer only a feeble notion. And Europe in fact was in a very similar state when a similar dogma came to it from Alexandria. Everywhere remedies were sought in ecstasy, in cosmogonic reveries, in theurgy, and in the illuminism of false prophets.

In truth, the so-called Oriental doctrines which have been propounded to us in recent years, are only a sort of

pseudo-mystical syncretism, worked out by a professor of the history of religions, a runaway Sanscrit scholar, a German philosopher, and spread by theosophists and pacifists in the pay of newly-established nations. When stated thus, the famous dilemma, 'East and West', betrays its origin immediately.

But there are methods of orientalizing us more specious, doctrines more circuitous, less open ways than those of the Theosophists or Occultists. The poison of the East, in the form most easily assimilated, insinuates itself very subtly by attacks aimed at the very notion of *personality*, at autonomy, at the spiritual and moral identity of the human composite, at that substantial reality which makes us master of our actions and independent with regard to the things of sense.

This dissolution of the human personality is the feature that strikes us in the most recent manifestations of our young literary men, the disciples of Marcel Proust and André Gide, for example; it is the sign that marks this influence and this new literary acquisition. All the characters drawn by our young authors are recognisable by the fact that they are no longer 'centred', and have a strange resemblance to each other that is well adapted to distinguish them from all the human types that have hitherto appeared in French literature. There is about them something loose, something like a refusal to take form, to be formed, to straighten out, to make unity of their discords. There is no effort to concentrate on any point in their sensibility, but an entirely material sincerity in which the mind no longer plays a part. Not only have their intelligence and their will no distinct aim, but it seems that the subject himself is looking for an indiscoverable 'ego', as if the end of modern individualism, after having made itself the centre of everything in order to live the selfish life of the passions and the senses, must

finally result in a total dilution, a complete reabsorption into the original confusion of things. It might also be said that these new characters, that have issued from the dissociations of a morbid psychology, are not even in search of an identity, in which they seem no longer to believe, and that they tend by instinct to escape from the grip of the world in order to slip away from themselves. It is the lassitude of a generation that was bruised too soon by life, and that has no discipline of heart or mind to defend it against that feeling of powerlessness to which so many disappointments have made it prone.

But it is here that Asiaticism lies in wait for us. For what affinity has Asia with us? What feeling can she satisfy, in so far as we are capable of receiving her untranslatable message, unless it be a certain taste for self-defeat, a need, as it were, for self-destruction. The *annihilation of the personality*, that is what, rightly or wrongly, we are seeking and finding in approaching her soul; for it begins by breaking up all our ways of being and thinking, by depriving us in advance of the very qualities that would shelter us from its infection, by plunging us into a sort of diffused knowledge, which, just because of the amount it claims to comprehend and embrace, must first of all give up the attempt to define itself. It seems that we can only advance in knowledge of Asia on condition that at the outset we divest ourselves of this desire for definition, for precision, for separation, that is native to the Western mind in its full vigour; and whatever its teachings may at bottom be, such is undoubtedly the clearest result of Asiatic influence.

The radical and essential opposition between the East and the West lies in the different idea that each has of man and his relation to the Universe. Here in the West, man has desired *to be*, he has not consented to lose himself in things, or subscribed to the notion that the human personality is nothing but a mere dependence of nature

playing with the illusion of living forms and confounding all life in an immense equivocation. It is this resistance that characterizes the man of the West. Distinction, choice, these are the mark of his thought, formulated once for all in the great ages in the classic maxim of Anaxagoras: 'At the beginning all things were confused; intelligence came and put each thing in its place.' It is from the vision of this order, the intellectual hierarchies that it forms, from the idea of resemblances and differences, that there springs by a process at once rational and natural the general movement, and in particular that development of the human personality which right from the beginning is so striking in the history of the West.

The Asiatic hierarchy, on the other hand, seems to have a character of pure force, pure will, even of pure intellection, and at the same time an arbitrary character, either natural or human. From the first, Oriental speculation plunged into the contemplation of the One identical with the All, and the limits of the human personality and the opposition of the forces composing it, vanished, lost in the troubled waves of the nameless powers composing it. Turned fixedly inwards, accustomed to establish a close and permanent correspondence between himself and the universe, the Asiatic becomes absorbed until the identity of his *ego* with the unattainable Being, an inhabitant of the abyss, is revealed to him. Thus he comes to regard his own life as a painful accident in the swarming of universal life. Existence seems to him an evil, and personality the radical evil, of which he must divest himself in order to reach the beatitude which he can find only in the hallucination of nothingness, in an illusory transcendentalism, if not in a radical agnosticism in which there is no longer any God, any soul, any external world, nothing but the torrent of things.

Whether it be the Upanishads or the Vedanta, which destroys the idea of the external world, the belief in the

reality of the universe, or the Samkhya, which destroys the idea of God, or the Yoga, which abolishes the reason and even the use of thought, or Buddhism, which denies the existence of the soul, all Asiatic wisdom ends in the final dissolution of personality. The necessary consequence is the annihilation of human activity, and the paralysing of the nerve of action which it regards only with disgust and a transcendent pity. Balance of thought and action on the other hand is the quality proper to the West, its authentic philosophy. Pessimism and distaste for effort are the distinctive marks of the Asiatic. But the kernel lies in 'depersonalisation', the aim and end of his effort, whether he seeks in it salvation, deliverance from the whirlwind of continual reincarnations, the pain of successive rebirths, or whether he destroys the illusion of consciousness, or frees himself from the material, emotional and intellectual ego in order to contemplate the divine soul. And all these doctrines in the end lead back to the Pantheism from which they originated; all the efforts of the Theosophists tend towards one end, which is that of all the mystical Pantheists; the real identity of the subject and the object, of the individual soul and the universal soul, of man and God.

There is in Asia, as Chesterton says, 'a great evil spirit who is trying to melt everything in the same crucible, and who represents everything bathing in an immense pool.' There is nothing worse for the West than this method of thought, which aims at abolishing the lines of demarcation, both those of human personality and those of property. These Asiatic doctrines are all the more likely to destroy the West because it is no longer sure of its laws nor of its institutions and because it has a divided mind in a sick body.

Thus the Western man has no more pressing need than the need for fresh definitions. His difficulties are



not entirely due to the circumstances that are bruising him. The struggle that shakes the City rages first of all in himself. And from what is he suffering? From his diverse thought, his different faiths, his unequal sciences, his individual moral systems, his different forms of education. He needs a systematising truth whence to draw the soul of his actions. His fundamental and essential weakness lies in his mind, which is perpetually tossed hither and thither between his certainties and his guesses, his virtues and his cupidities. Without a doctrine, without a common spirit, without a philosophy which would give the same name to the same things, and would understand the same ideas by the same signs, there is no remedy to be found in words that ruin States as they ruin individuals.

The younger generation in Europe know this. They are eager to discover the 'elements of the universal discipline to which they will deliberately give their adherence'. At the root of their agony, of this new '*mal du siècle*' from which they are suffering, can be felt a sort of great questioning of the foundations of all morals and of our whole spirit. They begin to dream: 'It is time to found a new church, to return to philosophy, to the cult of wisdom.'<sup>1</sup> And it is these vague desires that this pseudo-Oriental metaphysic is trying to capture. It exploits the discontent of their mind and masks with the charm of poetry and mystery the savage appetites of racial rivalry.

Asiatic Pantheism, transplanted to Berlin, assumes the guise of a warlike claim; Russian communism, which is based fundamentally on the Tolstoyan doctrine of non-resistance to evil, becomes everywhere a conquering Slavism; behind the Hindoo chant, the rhythm of rebellion and wrath may be heard. Because the problem is spiritual in the first place, we are apt to fail to see these harsh realities, or to be ready to give ear to false prophets who persuade us to a catastrophic conception of the Universe.

<sup>1</sup> Drieu la Rochelle.

'The great nations of the West are on the eve of ruin', groans M. Romain Rolland. 'This talk of revenge and supremacy is all very fine. If these mad dogs persist in tearing each other to pieces, the heavy hand of fate will find means to separate them by beating them down, bruised and humiliated. . . . And fate is wise when nations are mad. Fate has taken the helm. Let him who can wrest it from her. . . .'

This fate has a name and a face. In order to overcome the dangers that threaten us, we must be able to name them. To put it briefly, they are Bolshevism and Asiaticism. The whole of civilisation is reduced to defending itself against this dark barbarism which is so powerfully organised. But we have to choose between the most strict observance of the conditions of all life and liberty and the rapid eclipse of these two possessions. Civilisation will live only in so far as we will it to live, and form of it a master-idea, a governing idea, a fundamental idea. Are we resigned to perishing? 'If we are not we must be prepared for a whole-hearted and universal service. No one without injustice or opprobrium can take refuge above the universal struggle. When everything is being spent and poured out, by what scandalous exception can the man of intellect only, the man of powerful intellect, hold himself aloof? How can that which can create so much moral force be loath to serve? It would be treason. No man of honour, no man with any care for the future, could choose such a course.'

# THE SOCRATIC VIRTUES OF IRVING BABBITT

By GORHAM B. MUNSON

## I

THE critic who attempts to be comprehensive may be a disciple of Sainte-Beuve. He who attempts to be cohesive may be simply a narrow pedagogue, another sou minted from Boileau. But the critic who wishes to view things as wholes must be both comprehensive and cohesive, and will probably look upon Socrates as his master. The distinction of Professor Irving Babbitt is that he endeavours to acquire the now unfashionable but not outworn Socratic virtues: he works for an attitude toward letters and the life of which letters are symptomatic that shall be comprehensive, cohesive and based upon perceptions of wholes.

This direction and this effort enable him to outrank almost all of his colleagues in American literary criticism: there are only three names one might cite as practising at present the same order of criticism. For obviously the impressionists who make up the majority of our critics eschew the viewing of wholes, care little for cohesion, and at best can attain only to an unregulated comprehensiveness. Nor can the scholars who concentrate on the various aspects of literature—sociological, historical, æsthetic, or biographical—achieve an attitude as inclusive and profoundly integrated as that of Professor Babbitt, since they are judging not wholes, but one or two aspects of wholes. Again, it is not merely a matter of erudition, for a number of our critics do have a considerable acquaintance with

the tracts of English and European culture and with the remains of the cultures of ancient Greece and Rome, but even so they have not extended their erudition as Babbitt has done his to the cultures of the Orient. Babbitt differs in that he has employed his erudition for a purpose that is beyond that of acquaintance. The purpose is understanding, and the digestive process by which acquaintance is converted into understanding is precisely the effort to grasp tendencies, literatures and cultures as organic entities.

A quick glance at Professor Babbitt's five books will at once show his range. He began by attempting in *Literature and the American College* (1908) to clarify the muddled problems of college education. In 1910, in *The New Laokoon*, he sought to make firm and valid distinctions among the arts. In 1912 appeared *The Masters of Modern French Criticism*, considered by many to be his most engaging book, and devoted to the general problem of literary criticism. The next six years went to the composing of his *magnum opus*, *Rousseau and Romanticism* (1918). Here it is the problem of the imagination, its nature, types and function, that he attacks. Another six years of labour and he stated his analysis of the political problem and his attitude toward the same in *Democracy and Leadership* (1924). That book closes with a discussion of the old and the new forms of education as training for ethical leadership, thus bringing his thought back to its starting point in 1908.

In the course of drawing this large circle, which passes unbrokenly from one difficult and knotted problem to another until it rounds back to its origin, Professor Babbitt has had to give his conclusions on religion, metaphysics, art, science, psychology, politics, education and conduct: he has had to display a general critical intelligence. It is a fashion to-day for a writer to utter opinions on as many subjects as those that have tested the patience of Professor Babbitt; but frequently these opinions, though

emanating from one man, clash on first principles with each other: they reflect a miscellany of attitudes rather than one central viewpoint. The explanation is, as Professor Babbitt once wrote, that 'individuals are usually not easy to label, especially at a time like the present. A highly unified age may offer examples of highly unified personalities; but there is likely to exist in the individual of to-day the same confused conflict of tendencies that we see in the larger world.' It is Professor Babbitt's Socratic merit that he has succeeded in charting the contemporary chaos and in constructing for himself a unifying attitude.

What is that chaos and what is his unifying attitude? Let us glance again at his five books.

In the first, he showed himself a vigorous opponent of what may be generally termed 'educational impressionism' and its fruits in the elective system, the transformation of the college into the university, and the programme, partly humanitarian and partly utilitarian, of 'training for power and service'. On the contrary, he argued that the ideal formula for the college should be training for wisdom and character by the processes of assimilation and reflection: that the college, by virtue of the fact that it stands, not for the advancement of learning but *for the assimilation of learning and the perpetuation of culture*, should occupy a definite place between the lower schools where the receptive attitude is the proper one for students, and the graduate schools where the 'productive scholar' should have full scope: and that art and literature stand in vital relation to human nature as a whole, and are not to be considered forms of 'play' after occupation with scientific analysis.

In *The New Laokoon* the attack centres on the romantic confusion of the arts. Professor Babbitt first reviews the analysis performed by Lessing in 1766 of the neo-classical confusion of the arts, and then outlines an entirely new confusion created by the romantics since the days of

Lessing. The neo-classicists went astray on the Horatian maxim: *ut pictura poesis*. The romantics substituted for that the maxim, 'architecture is frozen music', of disputed authorship. Back of that maxim can be detected the Rousseauistic theory of spontaneity and revery, with its fruits—the vogue of suggestiveness and the special problems of word-painting, programme-music, and colour-audition. To the Rousseauistic theory of spontaneity Professor Babbitt opposed a Platonic spontaneity arising from meditation and insight: he protested against the confusion of the planes of being and the confusion of various sense impressions on one plane: he pointed out that the devotees of suggestiveness simply rested in a hypnosis for the sake of the hypnosis, or better, that they rested in illusion for the sake of illusion. Inevitably, he was compelled to relate the claims of form to the claims of expression and to attempt to define the limits of naturalism.

The valid assumption upon which *The Masters of Modern French Criticism* was composed is that he who penetrates to the intellectual centre of modern France, touches the intellectual centre of our age. The substances of Mme. de Staël, Chateaubriand, Joubert, Sainte-Beuve, Scherer, Renan, Brunetière and others are firmly grasped and examined, and the germs in them which have since spread through our critical systems are skilfully isolated. The conclusion is that literary criticism in the nineteenth century moved away from its centre, which is composed of standards and judgments, to a periphery segmented into history, impressionism, relativism, biography and gossip. The book marches stoutly to a solid programmatic conclusion of its own.

*The New Laokoon* was a study of emotional anarchy, but Professor Babbitt tells us that on closer scrutiny emotional anarchy turns out to be a sign of something subtler and more dangerous, namely, anarchy of the imagination, and

*Rousseau and Romanticism* is therefore addressed to the problem of the imagination and its function. It is a veritable anatomy of the idyllic or arcadian imagination in its principal phases—romantic love, romantic morality, romantic worship of nature, romantic irony and romantic melancholy. As in all his other works, Professor Babbitt matches one viewpoint against another, and the exposition of imaginative anarchy is accompanied by a steady counter-exposition of the ordered ethical imagination.

There remained to be dealt with the political problem. This problem we are trying to solve on Baconian, Rousseauistic and Machiavellian lines: that is, in utilitarian, sentimental and imperialistic ways. In *Democracy and Leadership* Professor Babbitt tilts against these tendencies, recommends for close emulation the moral political imagination of an Edmund Burke, and seeks to complement Occidental political, ethical and philosophic experience with the profound and vast experience of the Orient. He reiterates the statements of the preceding books as to the desperate necessity for standards.

This is probably sufficient to show that the name of our modern chaos is, for Professor Babbitt, romanticism, and that the name of his centralising attitude is humanism. He who can master the subject of romanticism, know its history, penetrate the psychology of its leaders, flow with it in all its many directions and recoils, sum up its valuations and limitations, may well be said to be comprehensive and flexible. If at the same time he can grasp the ancient doctrine of humanism, reanimate it with modern vitality, and pit it at every point against the romantic drift, then indeed he may be said to have a cohesive outlook upon life. And, of course, in so doing he has doubly proved his capacity to take the total view.

## II

The civilization in which Irving Babbitt lives has

strained its vocal chords shouting 'self-expression', 'service', 'progress', 'liberty', '*élan vital*', 'specialization', 'originality', 'fraternity', and so on. Necessarily he heard these catch-words, but he reacted to them in an unusual way: he paused to examine them for content. He found them the signs of modern tendencies and he traced these tendencies as they ramified back through history to their origins. After a protracted determined effort to grasp the elusive and variegated phenomena of romanticism as a whole, here is the framework of our modern civilisation as he has disengaged it.

Francis Bacon and Jean-Jacques Rousseau are the two men of genius who almost completely prefigure our modern era: they are the fathers of the progeny of scientific naturalists and sentimental naturalists who dominate our time.

Bacon's influence was decisive in two ways: he turned man's attentive gaze outward upon the external mechanical flux of nature and he put vitality into the distinctively modern idea of progress. Since Bacon numerous utilitarian victories have been scored over nature, and the net result has been called progress, whence arises the delusion that 'because we are advancing rapidly in one direction we are advancing in all directions'.

Rousseau, on the other hand, based his philosophy upon the internal mechanical flux of nature in man's personality, indolently followed the inclinations of his temperament, and called such a course liberty.

Although superficially hostile to each other, Rousseauism and Baconianism are fundamentally friendly. They agree first of all in placing men solely under the so-called 'natural law', in denying the 'something more than nature' in man. Both Baconian and Rousseauist believe in a world of relativity and change and endless motion in which there are no possible fixed points, and both believe that mankind is progressing toward a Utopia to be achieved



according to the first by the perfecting of our machinery and according to the second by the cultivation of an all-embracing love. Each plays into the other's hands: the Baconian who subordinates his intellect to no faculty or end higher than itself is comforted by being informed that virtue is merely an expansive emotion, and he is recreated and relaxed by an art that caresses his sensibility without challenging his will, whereas the Rousseauist finds that the machines devised by the Baconian provide the easy impressions of infinity, the comforts and the thrills that he thrives upon. In the end, both serve the instinctive and emotional man, for the intellectual powers of the scientific naturalist have multiplied a thousandfold man's ability to destroy and at the same time have made living a far more comfortable affair than ever before, while the sentimental naturalist cultivates his expansive emotions and seeks unity in his instinctive life.

By implication, practically all of the cardinal doctrines of romanticism are contained in the preceding paragraph. The romanticist facing the Platonic dilemma of the One and the Many lets go the horn representing the One and elaborates a metaphysic of the Many (e.g., William James and Bergson). Ethically, he affirms the natural inherent goodness of man, transfers the blame for man's shortcomings upon a vicious artificial society, and declares that man can reach perfectibility simply by tempering his egoism with universal pity. Psychologically, it is apparent that romanticism builds upon wish and instinct. It distrusts the intellect, even the analytical propensity of its ally, scientific naturalism, and it denies the will. Opportunely enough, psycho-analysis has arrived to emphasize the dangers of repression. And practically, that is in terms of conduct, romanticism means simply this: follow your inclinations and pursue the superlative thrill.

The necessary corollary has been the cult of the original spontaneous genius and the inevitable consequence of

that has been the widening of the distance between the *sens commun* and the *sens propre*.

A sociology has grown up with the other manifestations of romanticism and its name is humanitarianism, although it has sometimes wrongfully taken the name of humanism. But, as Professor Babbitt remarked in his first book, 'a person who has sympathy for mankind in the lump, faith in its future progress, and desire to serve the great cause of this progress, should be called not a humanist, but a humanitarian, and his creed may be designated as humanitarianism'. The humanitarian, of course, lacks a principle of selection: his 'virtue' is precisely an expansive unselective sympathy. The humanist, however, feels obliged to mediate between selection and sympathy, to practise a selective sympathy. Humanism is a doctrine and a discipline, aristocratic in temper and mediatory in practice, whose end is the perfecting of the individual.

Now Professor Babbitt's task has been duofold: to direct a heavy shell fire on the hordes of romanticists, and to build a modern fortress for the humanists. Being a humanist, he has quite naturally drawn his strength from certain cultures of the ancient world, Greece for the most part, and Socrates, Plato and Aristotle in particular. But he has fed his assimilated Greek wisdom with tributary streams from the humanistic Confucius in China and from the religious Buddha in India and the religious Jesus in Judea. It is men such as these, and lesser men such as Dr. Johnson, Edmund Burke, Emerson and Goethe, that he pits against the attractive figures of Francis Bacon and Jean-Jacques Rousseau in his re-assertion of the 'human law'. Emerson wrote:

'There are two laws discrete  
Not reconciled—  
Law for man, and law for thing;  
The last builds town and fleet,  
But it runs wild,  
And doth the man unking.'

And Babbitt finds in these laws a central poetic formulation for his whole reasoned thesis.

The briefest way to outline that thesis is to match it, point by point, with the summary we have just made of the romantic attitude. The humanist on the metaphysical side confronts squarely the Platonic problem of the One and the Many. He does not credit the possibility of discovering the absolute, but he holds that it is possible to mediate between his impressions of the Many and his intuitions of the One. 'Life', says Professor Babbitt, 'does not here give an element of oneness and there an element of change. It gives a *oneness that is always changing*. The oneness and the change are inseparable. Now if what is stable and permanent is felt as real, the side of life that is always slipping over into something else or vanishing away entirely is, as every student of psychology knows, associated rather with the feeling of illusion . . . the problem of the One and the Many, the ultimate problem of thought, can therefore be solved only by a right use of illusion.' Illusion is in fact, he says elsewhere, an integral part of reality, but we must make use of illusion (the function of the imagination) for the sake of the reason and not for the sake of the senses.

To the romanticist statement that man is naturally good, the humanist retorts that he is naturally inherently indolent, that there exists a real civil war in man between his natural self and his human self for which society cannot be held responsible, and that it is only by ethical strenuousness that man can perfect himself. The psychology of the two great schools differs as widely. 'The man who thinks is a depraved animal,' cried Rousseau, but the humanist insists that man must think as well as feel and act, and further he maintains that man has intuitions that are anterior and superior to thought. Lastly, the humanist assigns to man a power of concentration and self-discipline that he names the 'will'. '*Elan vital*' is supplemented

and corrected by '*frein vital*'. The opposition continues in terms of conduct. The practical humanist constructs a model, a standard of excellence based upon the past experience of the race and his own confirmation of that experience, and proceeds to imitate it. Disdaining to write 'Whim' upon the lintel of his door, he tries to observe the laws of measure and decorum. He seeks to express not his unique accidental self but the self that is common to him and all other men.

Such are the two doctrines, as Professor Babbitt presents them, locked in a widespread conflict. If in my notation of them there appear to be many tacit assumptions, much glossing over of debatable issues, too great a simplification of intricate matters, it is only fair to say that Professor Babbitt has been most thorough in bringing to light his own latent assumptions and in entering into debate on all possible disputed points. In particular, he is practised in the Socratic dichotomy of general terms. He has thereby earned the right to simplify and I have simply further compressed his simplifications. His books contain the full content for the terms of his conclusions.

But I hope to have suggested that he is a figure to be reckoned with in any discussion of 'culture and anarchy', that we must read him in conjunction with Matthew Arnold, Paul Elmer More, Pierre Lasserre and Julien Benda for the breadth and wholeness of his views and for the ruggedness of his analyses.

# THE CONTEMPLATION OF THE WORD

By R. ELLSWORTH LARSSON

(For MURIEL DRAPER)

## I

NOW are the gods  
departed from the land

and we  
who waver in the wake of winds  
from their emblazoned cars  
are garmented with sifting dust  
and blind of eye

and we  
who walked the tender fields  
and stopped beneath the fragile shade  
of jewelled trees sun-gilded  
trees

whose stirring leaves  
made colored music veil  
the silver-sounding step  
of those kindly kings of earth  
and the slow-phrased crystal step  
of other kings and gracious queens  
of veined-opal face and glowing brow  
who walked with us  
on either hand  
and showed us radiant signs  
and spoke the secret word.

## II

Now are the gods departed  
 and we stumble in the swirling wind  
 and huddle in the dust that clots  
 the stagnant slimy words  
 upon our tongues

nor are the vanished gods  
 departed to the awful skies  
 that belch forth dust  
 and writhe in warning  
 screaming

## DEATH

—and no king  
 walks the thrashing tangles of the wood  
 and no queen wanders  
 by the cackling stream  
 nor sits beneath the leafless  
 shriven trees

whose leaves  
 lie scattered on the fallow ground  
 spattered with blood  
 and mingled with the dust

The turgid seas  
 hiss venom  
     gulping  
 our battered ships  
 and snatching up our tarnished kings  
 and weazened men  
 who sink into that growling maw  
 to heave upon the floor of angry ocean  
 among the wrecks of ships  
 the scattered bows and powdered urns

Now do the winds shriek tortures  
and our clotted tongues  
are dumb

## III

These  
are the words we scrawled  
upon the walls of caves  
these (the signs

These are the words  
we conjured with the wine  
of spring  
(these are the words  
the gods wore  
on their glowing brows)  
and these  
the images we chiselled  
smiling lips cleft round  
a word

These are the urns  
the temples that contained the wine  
the word  
this twisted gold  
the amulet  
(this hollow sound  
the secret music)

These  
are the relics of the queens  
and kings who walked with us  
across the tender fields  
beneath the jewelled trees

These  
are the relics of the dead

These are the names  
we murmured when the wind was still  
before  
the hideous skies belched dust  
and savage hurricanes  
screamed

DEATH

—These are the words  
our clacking tongues  
now name  
as Death



# COUSIN FANNY AND COUSIN ANNIE

By C. K. SCOTT MONCRIEFF

## VII

SOMETHING that was said about Cousin Fanny finding things difficult now made Alec discover that she had been getting money from his pater all the time that he had been with her, which made him furious. Of course it had been jolly decent of Cousin Fanny to have him, though it had been rather slow having to spend one's hols in a poky little house with two old women and a mongrel dog, but that made it all the more beastly that Cousin Fanny should have needed to be paid to take him. He had always supposed she was fond of him, and he remembered how she used sometimes to take him on her knee when he was quite a kid, and ask him: 'Whom do you love best, Alec?' and he had to say: 'God;' and when she asked: 'And next best?' he said: 'Father and Mother in India,' and when she said again: 'And *next* best?' then he used to wait a little, to make her anxious, and hide his face on her arm, and say in a loud voice: 'Cousin Fanny!' and then she was pleased. And all the time she had been taking money for him like a woman in a shop. He didn't know whether he hated her more for taking the money or his pater for offering it. Then he discovered that his pater had not very much money, and that when everything had been paid for there was very little left over; and he made up his mind when he grew up to be careful about money, and not to spend very much on things, as it was often difficult to get more.

## VIII

After his governor had left the Service, he and Alec's

mother went abroad one Easter because of his sciatica, which was troubling him, and Alec said he didn't mind spending the holidays with Cousin Fanny. He rather liked the house this time, it was so full of things that reminded him of himself, and Cousin Fanny seemed younger than he remembered her, though Annie had shrivelled up like a little withered potato, and the white dog was very fat and always choking on the carpet, until he had to let it out. He and Cousin Fanny had dinner together every evening with a woman called Miss Padge, who had come to live there as a paying guest, and Alec put on his black suit and pumps and a stick-up collar and a black bow tie, and Cousin Fanny had ordered in a lot of lemonade in blue syphons as a treat for him, and was quite shocked when he told her that they got beer at school. But Miss Padge only said, in a knowing voice: 'Boys will be boys, Miss Fanny,' which was the sort of thing she was always saying. Alec didn't like Miss Padge, because she always flattered Cousin Fanny, and called her, 'Miss Fanny', like a servant; but when Miss Padge went out to a lecture in the evening, which she often did to improve her mind, he and Cousin Fanny were quite happy together by themselves, and he used to play the piano to her, and she unlocked a rosewood cabinet and brought out a whole pile of songs that she used to sing long ago, and they sang them together. Cousin Fanny sang: *We met, 'twas in a crowd*, but it always made her very sad, because she had known someone like that when she was a girl, whom her mother hadn't cared about. Alec sang *Ich grolle nicht*, and several more of Schumann's songs, which a friend of his sang at school, and he tried to sing *Erkönig*, but the accompaniment was too difficult for them; besides, he didn't really understand German, only what Cousin Fanny told him. And he read her a lot of the poetry he had discovered in the library at school, and she liked most of it very much, and he thought she

had a great deal more sense than most of the masters, who read nothing but Wisden's Almanac, and thought poetry effeminate. She told him that she had once nearly met Browning, at a friend's house, and that he had been the last of the great poets, but Alec said, what about Swinburne, who was still alive. Cousin Fanny had never heard of Swinburne, and didn't seem to see the beauty of the poems Alec could remember off-hand. But one day, when she was resting because of the east winds (only Alec thought she said 'These twins' at first, and wondered who on earth the twins could be), he read her *The Triumph of Time*, which he had copied out into a big notebook with *Dolores* and *Sister Helen* and some poems from *The Defence of Guenevere*; and she had to admit the *The Triumph of Time* was very wonderful. And he thought of reading her *Dolores*, but he was afraid it might shock her, so he read her William Morris's *Golden Wings* instead, but she didn't care much for that. The only thing was, Miss Padge was always coming in and interrupting them, and one morning at breakfast Miss Padge said: 'I heard you from my room yesterday, Miss Fanny; you were playing so beautifully!' when it had been Alec who was playing, and he played simply rottenly, he knew, because there was a chap at school who really could play; and he thought Miss Padge was an old fool. He couldn't imagine why Cousin Fanny kept her in the house, until she told him that Miss Padge was very poor, and couldn't afford to live anywhere else like a lady. But he said that Miss Padge wasn't a lady, at which Cousin Fanny sighed and said we should never judge others, and that Miss Padge had been a very earnest worker until her health gave way. Alec supposed that Cousin Fanny herself was probably too poor to be able to live like a lady without what she got from Miss Padge, and he felt very sorry for her and hoped that his governor was making it really worth her while to have him for these holidays.

One morning at breakfast Miss Padge asked whether Alec had been out to wash his face in the dew, and he couldn't think what she meant until she reminded him that it was the first of May; and he thought that May had something special to do with Cousin Fanny, but he couldn't remember what it was, and she didn't seem to remember either. But that afternoon in the drawing-room the sunlight fell on the picture of a girl in a ball-dress with a flower in her hand, and he remembered that this was the picture of Cousin Fanny's mother, which had always been covered with a black curtain because Cousin Fanny's mother was dead. And then he remembered that May was the month in which Cousin Fanny's mother had died, and that Cousin Fanny used always to be very sad then. And Miss Padge came in and began trying to tell him about the choirboys at Oxford on May morning, which made him furious because he had a friend who had gone up to Magdalen that year, and anyhow she had no business to talk about Oxford as if she'd invented it. A day or two later he went back to school, and Cousin Fanny gave him a pound, which he didn't quite like to take if she was so poor, except that he needed it, really, more than she did, and Miss Padge gave him a sacred picture framed in fir-cones, which she said she had got once in Bavaria. He went into the kitchen on his way to the cab, and Annie gave him a huge cake which she had baked for him, and told him he could eat grass off the top of her head now. This made him laugh, because she was almost bald. But he said it was jolly decent of her to have made him the cake.

## IX

He hadn't been near the place for years when he found himself posted to a Service Battalion of his father's old Regiment, which was in camp a few miles from where Cousin Fanny lived. He was there for a couple of months,

and twice a week he went over and had a hot bath, and stayed to dinner with Cousin Fanny. The bath-room was fearfully old-fashioned, with a brass thing on a tube, like a garden hose, to spray yourself with, but most of the holes were stopped up, and when you turned on the cold tap a trickle of hot water came out of it. Still, it was better than having a bath outside his tent, in the rain. His cousin had grown very small, and so wrinkled that when she smiled her face was almost wicked, and he supposed she must be at least seventy. The first day he went over, she asked him: 'Have you been in to see Annie; your "Cousin Annie", as you used to call her?' He had forgotten all about Annie, but he ran down at once to the kitchen and burst in; and Annie didn't know him at first, and walked round him like a dog, to see who it was. Then she said: 'Well, you're a gentleman now!' and they both laughed, and he put his stick and gloves on the table and lifted her on to it and told her she could eat grass off the top of his head. And she showed him all the tin boxes with tea and rice and things in them, and a little china dog she said he had given her that stood beside a tin box with a hideous picture of Queen Victoria at the time of the first Jubilee. Alec wondered how old Annie was, remembering that she had come to the house when Cousin Fanny was a child. Then he went up to the drawing-room again and had tea with Cousin Fanny, who asked him if he thought the war was really a just war, because she hated all wars, but she hoped that this one might be just. So he told her all the things he had heard about the war, and they both became very serious. And before he went back to camp she gave him a little crucifix which she had been asked to buy by an indigent gentlewoman, who was Irish; and said that she didn't like to wear it herself, but perhaps he would carry it in his pocket.

Before he went out to France he came over for a day, and said good-bye to them, and kissed them both, and

promised to write. And Annie called out after him as he was going down the path to the gate: 'I wouldn't go and fight for those Servians, Mr. Alec. That's the second couple they've murdered.' Which was her way of looking at it. And Cousin Fanny said that they would pray for him every day the war lasted, at Prayers, as well as in their own prayers. This made him feel very solemn, so she asked him timidly whether he still remembered the German songs they used to sing together; and they went to the rosewood cabinet and got out the volume of Schumann, and Alec sang *Ich grolle nicht* and *Erlkönig* and several others, and she sang *Du bist wie eine Blume* in a very quavery voice; and they tried to sing *Die Grenadiere*, but he had to stop.

## X

One evening Alec's company came out of the trenches into billets in a half-ruined village which was already full of refugees from the other side of the line. In the room in which he and his subalterns had their dinner an old woman was sitting by the stove, turning over a rosary in her hands while tears rolled down her cheeks; and every now and then she sighed. She took no notice of the officers, and Alec wondered why she stayed in the room, as they were making rather a noise, until he realised that there was no other room in the world where she could go. When one of them mentioned the name of the village through which their last trenches had run, she looked up with a start, and when Alec spoke to her told him that that was her village, and asked him if he had seen her house, which she tried to describe. There were no houses left within miles of the place, but he told her as gently as he could what a pretty village it was, and assured her that she would soon be safe at home again. While he was talking to her his company runner came in from Battalion headquarters with the Orders. The runner was a little old

man, over fifty, who had been a poacher all his life, and could find his way to places he had never heard of before on the darkest nights and under heavy fire. He had always reminded Alec of somebody, and to-night as he looked at him he saw that the runner, who was warming his hands over the stove, was just like his cousin's old cook, Annie, and the old woman in the chair, with her look of hopeless sadness, was like his Cousin Fanny herself. And he remembered that they were both praying for him, and made up his mind to write to them both that evening, and was looking in his haversack for paper and envelopes when another messenger came from headquarters inviting him to play poker with the C.O., Quartermaster and Chaplain. And next morning the Battalion marched back into a training area to prepare for the Spring offensive, in which half the officers and more than a third of the men were killed or wounded. Which kept one busy.

## XI

While he was at the Base, Alec had a long letter from his cousin, which made him cry because his arm hurt like the devil, and he remembered he had promised to write to her two years before. A V.A.D. came past and stopped to tidy his bed (which hurt him even more), and pretended not to see that he was crying, but smiled at him because she supposed that he was in love and had just got a letter from his girl. Cousin Fanny had moved into a smaller house, and Annie had left, because the stairs were a difficulty, and had gone to live by herself in a town about ten miles away. She gave him Annie's address, and hoped that when he was in England, and able to get about, he would go and see her. He thought a great deal about Annie, and wondered how on earth she was managing to live. Cousin Fanny, he remembered, had never had a cheque-book in her life; or a latchkey, for that matter. When she wanted money she used to

write to New Square—which meant the office of her mother's solicitors—and about three days later a five pound note would arrive in a registered envelope. This she gave to Annie for the housekeeping, and Annie gave back whatever Cousin Fanny might want to spend on herself. Alec thought he had heard that she paid Annie twenty pounds a year, and he supposed that Annie must have saved something out of that, though he could not imagine how. He made up his mind to send her a handsome present when his wound gratuity came. But by that time he was in London, and able to go out of hospital; and he found that his expenses were very heavy, and whenever he thought, at night, as he lay awake, of sending something to Annie he seemed always to get a letter next morning reminding him that his account was overdrawn.

## XII

Some time after the war, Alec, who had been staying with friends in the country, received orders to appear before a Medical Board in the town in which Annie had gone to live. To be in time for the Board he had to arrive there overnight, and put up at an hotel. He had Annie's address still in his pocket-book and next morning, after the Board had examined him, he went to find her. The house was a tenement in a very poor quarter, and after he was inside it it occurred to him that he had never known Annie's other name. As he was standing in the passage and had almost decided to go back to his hotel, a woman came downstairs who looked at him curiously and said: 'You'll be Master Alec; have you come to see Annie?' This was distinctly odd; but the woman led him up to the top floor of the house and opened a door, and then stood in the doorway with her apron pressed to her face. Alec went into the room, which was very small, and frousty with the smell of extreme poverty. The ceiling sloped upwards from the opposite wall, with a



cracked skylight facing him, under which a saucer had been placed on the floor to catch the rain. The only chair stood by the fireplace, the grate in which had been closed up with bricks so as to leave only an inch or two for fuel. A few clothes hung on nails. A cup and saucer, two plates, a knife, a fork and a big and a little spoon were arranged on a dresser in one corner. In the other corner was a little iron bed, which seemed to Alec familiar somehow, and the woman went across to it and pulled down the blanket that was spread over the pillow. Then he saw Annie's face. She had died the evening before, while he was sitting at dinner in his tedious hotel, wondering what on earth he could do until bedtime. 'She was always talking about Master Alec,' the woman explained, and showed him a photograph tacked to the wall over the bed, of himself as a subaltern, which he had given to Cousin Fanny before he went first to France. He looked round the room again, and saw on the top of the dresser a little china dog which he remembered Annie's telling him he had given her once, years before, for her birthday or something, and a tin biscuit-box with a coloured picture of the old Queen on it, which (he remembered quite well) had been emptied of tea and put on the kitchen mantelpiece after the Queen's death. The woman who had brought him upstairs made some excuse and left the room; and Alec stood for a long time gazing at Annie's quiet face. He had stood in this way by many of his most intimate friends during the last five years, had lain awake in hospital wards where someone or other died every night, had helped to bury brother officers, and men of his own company, when the ground was frozen too hard for a pick to break it; but Annie dead; Annie to whom he had scarcely given a thought in all that time, was different. He knelt by the bed, sobbing, felt for her hard little hand and kissed it again and again, then rose and stooped over her face and kissed her shining forehead,

smiling through his tears as he remembered her little joke about his eating grass off the top of her head. Her face had that slightly shocked expression that she used to put on when she saw him come running into the kitchen with his fingers crushed in the lid of his cousin's piano. He tiptoed across the room, took up the little china dog and slipped it into his pocket. As he did so he wondered whether anyone else in all her eighty years had ever given Annie a present. This at least was to his credit. But on the other side, all the laborious, loving, ungrudging service of all those years, poured out for himself and other people without any question of their response to her. Miss—what was the woman's name?—Pudge, for instance; what had Miss Pudge—or Padge, was it? That sounded more likely—been to Annie but another mouth to be fed. Every single day since her childhood Annie had had to prepare all her own meals, and, until, her extreme old age, other people's as well. He thought of all the service that had been rendered him every day of his life, at school and in the army, and how easily he had taken it. What had he ever given Annie? Kisses, when he was little; and a china dog—and she had spent every moment when she was not in her kitchen by his bedside when he was ill. Why this was the bed he had been ill in. He could see its battered brass knob now grinning at him like a—what animal was it?—a monkey. She had given him shillings, too, in his school holidays. How many times in a year had he so much as thought of her since he had grown up? Had Cousin Fanny thought of her, in these last years, either? But then, what had he ever done for Cousin Fanny? At least he could break the news of Annie's death to her now. He left the house, telling the woman (whom he met again on the stairs) that he would return later and make all the arrangements for the funeral, and, after telegraphing to postpone his arrival at the house at which he was staying, hired a motor-car and drove to his cousin's

new address. He found her sitting up in bed, wearing a pink flannel dressing-jacket which seemed to revive in him a memory so remote that he could make nothing of it. She was pleased to see him, but puzzled at first to know why he had so suddenly come. And he could not speak; until at last: 'Cousin Annie's dead!' he cried out to her.

'Cousin Annie, dear?'

'Annie, your old cook.'

'Oh!' His cousin seemed quite unmoved. Then, with a little twist of her mouth, she piped: 'Well, we must all die some time, I suppose.'

Alec had never imagined her to be utterly heartless. It was only after a minute of strained silence, when he saw the girlish face of her mother smiling down at her from the picture opposite the foot of her bed, that he realised that she, too, might be longing to be set free from the burden of life.

# HOLY MATRIMONY

By HAROLD MONRO

## I

**I**T was a fatal trick to play upon him.  
With lusty life all pointing to one aim,  
And his whole body watchful:  
She at the moment came.

Could he resist? Could she? That one blue glance  
Was not her own: Oh a far stronger power  
Than hers shone at him through her  
And fixed their mating hour.

## II

Words, hardly needed, then were spoken,  
All having only one intent.  
They walked like children staring downward,  
With body toward body bent.

Now all the others mumble darkly,  
Wonder and enviously stare.  
There is a glowing in the household:  
Desire will dwell a moment here.

But older eyes gleam coldly on them;  
Stiffer bodies step between.  
Now while the preparations start  
They must be cleanly kept apart:  
So has the custom always been.

‘ You cannot kneel before the altar  
Until we’ve trimmed the lamp for you.  
Meanwhile you may a little woo;

We've much to do:  
We'll bake and sew and watch you sidelong,  
And make your wedding bed for you.'

## III

But he and she  
They hear, they stare,  
And they are asking:  
Who are we?

They cling and cry:  
What have we done?  
Through us what ceremonial  
Is begun?

The dark doors close  
Upon the sky.  
They shall be locked within  
Till they do die.

## IV

O prison church! O warder-priest!  
Now they who used to walk the wind of freedom  
Are living in your gloomy house of stone;  
And they and it are growing older;  
She is becoming every day less fair.  
The more together, they are more alone:  
They pile the fire and yet the hearth is colder.

# THE ROMANTIC FALLACY

By JOHN MIDDLETON MURRY

THE recent re-publication of Tolstoy's *What is Art?* has been the occasion of a more serious critical discussion of that remarkable book than it has received before.<sup>1</sup> Yet it has not been apparent that the more serious discussion has brought us any nearer to settling the fundamental question which it raises; the impression is rather that now, for the first time, it has been realised that the question is fundamental. Previously the correct attitude was to laugh at Tolstoy for a barbarian; now there seems to be an uneasy feeling that something more cogent is necessary. The old-fashioned appeal, still made in circles where nothing is learned and nothing forgotten, to that mysterious æsthetic sense which is the privilege of one in a hundred thousand, begins to tinkle a little forlornly, like the bells on a demoded buffoon, who made his reputation by replying to this question of 'What is art?'—*Je ne sais quoi, mais je sais ce que tu ne sais point qu'est-ce que c'est ce je ne sais quoi*. It was a good joke, in the good old days.

As well try to derail an express-train by putting a half-penny on the line, as counter Tolstoy's attack with such forlorn impertinences. That Tolstoy's attack is wrong, we all feel. But, how to counter it is another matter. To declare that art is a *je ne sais quoi* is a dangerous weapon against a giant who can reinforce his *mais, je sais, moi* by dropping *Anna Karenina* and *War and Peace* upon our diminished heads. We need less flimsy defences.

<sup>1</sup> *Tolstoy on Art*. Aylmer Maude. Oxford University Press,  
17s. 6d. net.

It is not easy to summarise Tolstoy's position with fidelity. He is not always consistent with himself, and his inconsistencies are not always negligible. In one place he declares that 'the function of art lies just in this: to make that understood and felt which in the form of an argument might be incomprehensible and inaccessible'; in another that 'an artist's work cannot be interpreted. Had it been possible to explain in words what he wished to convey, the artist would have expressed himself in words. He expressed it by his art, only because the feeling he experienced could not be otherwise transmitted.' The positions are obviously irreconcilable; and we must be content with assuming, from the main trend of his argument, that the latter was more truly his own position.

Indeed his fundamental proposition is that art consists in the communication of feelings, as opposed to thoughts. This absolute dichotomy underlies the whole of his argument. From it he concludes that the best art is that which communicates the best feelings. The judgment which are the best feelings depends upon the religious perception of the age; those are the best feelings which most approximate to the feelings inculcated by the common religion. Since this attitude may appear strange and almost barbarian, it may be worth recalling that it is the Greek attitude. Plato and Aristotle—as Tolstoy himself was perfectly aware—both insisted on the finality of the moral judgment in deciding the question what is good and what is bad art. Tolstoy emphatically reasserts their position. There are, he says, two acts of judgment: the first, whether a work is a work of art or not, is decided by the judgment whether the work does in fact communicate feelings; the second, whether it is good or bad art, is decided by the judgment whether the feelings communicated are good or bad. This judgment depends on the religious perception shared by society.

From this brief outline it will be obvious that to call

such an æsthetic provincial is itself provincial; it is both traditional and formidable; in a word, it is classical. And this quality in it is ignored partly because it is taken at second-hand, and partly because it is forgotten that Classicism is a principle more profound than the Palladianism of the eighteenth century. The principle of the autonomy of art, in whose name the Tolstoyan æsthetic is rejected as barbarian, is a wholly romantic conception. Again, Tolstoy is perfectly aware of the situation. He says that the modern principle that artistic beauty is an end in itself, sovereign in its own right, only arose at the Renaissance, with the decay of a common religious perception. There was no longer a generally accepted tribunal to which the judgment, whether the feelings communicated by a work of art were bad or good, could be referred. The fact that feelings were communicated, irrespective of what the feelings were, alone decided the goodness or badness of a work of art.

But, in fact—and here Tolstoy makes an important advance—the common religious perception, although ignored by the privileged classes, does still exist. The moral law of Christianity is recognised by the greater part of Western humanity. The Renaissance, which meant to the privileged few the abrogation of a common religion, meant to the many the purification of that religion from accretions and perversions. The many do know, by virtue of their active Christianity, what are good feelings and what are bad. And their judgment, that the feelings communicated by most modern<sup>1</sup> art are bad, is final.

It is important to be clear as to the indictment which Tolstoy brings against modern art. He does not deny that works of art are produced, though he is scornful of the inability of the educated public to distinguish between a true work of art, which does communicate feelings, and

<sup>1</sup> 'Modern' art, in Tolstoy's argument, means post-renaissance art. I have used the epithet in the same sense.



a false one, which does not communicate anything. But he declares that the further and necessary distinction among the works of art—which are good and which are bad—is not made at all. The very necessity of making the distinction has been forgotten. A particular example of his attitude appears in his essay on Maupassant. All Maupassant's works are true works of art, they communicate feelings. But a few are very good, some a mixture of good and bad, and others wholly bad, judged by the morality of true Christianity.

It is essential (Tolstoy continues) to a true religion that its perceptions and moral feelings are capable of being shared by all. A good work of true art will therefore be universally appreciated—or at any rate appreciated by all those whose religious and moral perceptions are not atrophied. The demand for an educated taste as a preliminary condition of appreciation is unnecessary and irrelevant, for by hypothesis the work of art communicates feelings, and man's emotional nature is independent of education. 'Art is differentiated from activity of the understanding . . . by the fact that it acts on people independently of their state of development and education, that the charm of a picture, of sounds or of forms, infects any man, whatever the plane of development.' Therefore, the question what are good and what are bad works of art, resolves into the question: who in modern society have their religious perceptions still unobscured, and their capacity for absolute moral judgment uncontaminated, for they are the final court of appeal. To this Tolstoy answers unhesitatingly: the simple-minded, the peasant.

That is, I believe, a fair statement of Tolstoy's argument. There are two weak, or at least doubtful, links in the chain. Is it true, or is it wholly true, that art consists in the communication of feelings in Tolstoy's sense of the word 'feelings', a sense in which they are utterly distinct from thoughts? Secondly, is it true, or is it wholly true,

that the highest religious perception which exists in modern society is the Christian perception? Some may consider that Tolstoy's contention that the judgment, whether a work of true art is good or bad, must be made, and must be a moral judgment, is also wrong. I do not; moreover I regard it as indubitable that this necessary moral judgment must, as Tolstoy contends, be based on a religious conception.

The problem—to take the second doubtful link first—is to determine where the religious conception is to be sought and found at the present time. Or, to translate into historical terms, was the religious significance of the Renaissance really contained, as Tolstoy asserts, in the Reformation; or was it something outside the Reformation? Tolstoy decides the question simply. At the Renaissance, he maintains, the educated classes abandoned Christianity for atheism, while the simpler folk restored and purified it. But it is not so simple. The finest minds at and after the Renaissance, once the first flush of rebellion was over, were not atheistical. They had bidden a long farewell to dogmatism and formalism: Church-Christianity, as Tolstoy calls it, was no longer for them the embodiment of 'the highest life-conception' of which they were capable. They embarked on the search for a higher one. It is strange that Tolstoy, the artist, should not have recognised the nature of the effort and the achievement of the greatest post-Renaissance artists, for they fully satisfy the conditions which, he said, 'must be fulfilled to enable a man to produce a real work of art'.

'It is necessary that he should stand on the level of the highest life-conception of his time, that he should experience feeling and have the desire and capacity to transmit it, and that he should moreover have a talent for some one of the forms of art.'

But Tolstoy, who was apparently insensible to the nature of Shakespeare's achievement, could not see (or would not admit) that the greatest post-Renaissance artists

had stood head and shoulders above 'the level of the highest life-conception of their time'. To account for Tolstoy's blindness in this respect would take us far: we should need to search for its causes deep in his elemental nature. But a glimpse of them is given in his curious *Confession* of 1879.

'Art, poetry? . . . Under the influence of success and the praise of men I had long assured myself that this was a thing one could do though death was drawing near—death which destroys all things, including my work and its remembrance, but soon I saw that that too was a fraud. It was plain to me that art was an adornment of life, an allurements to life. But life has lost its attraction for me; so how could I attract others? As long as I was not living my own life but was borne on the waves of some other life—as long as I believed that life had a meaning, though one I could not express—the reflection of life in poetry and art of all kinds afforded me pleasure: it was pleasant to look at life in the mirror of art. But when I began to seek the meaning of life, and felt the necessity of living my own life, that mirror became for me unnecessary, superfluous, ridiculous or painful. I could no longer soothe myself into ignoring what I now saw in the mirror, namely, that my position was stupid and desperate. It was all very well to enjoy the sight when in the depth of my soul I believed that life had a meaning. Then the play of lights—comic, tragic, touching, beautiful and terrible—in life amused me. But when I knew life to be meaningless and terrible, the play in the mirror could no longer amuse me.'

The importance of that confession is as manifest as its sincerity; it marks the climacteric in Tolstoy's spiritual evolution. But we are here concerned only with the light it incidentally throws upon Tolstoy's conception of art before what has been called his 'conversion'. Art was to him a faithful representation of life, which ceased to have meaning when life ceased to have meaning. And, in truth, after this point life never regained a meaning for Tolstoy. For some inscrutable reason the realisation of the fact of death, which came late to him, was never overcome; he could not accept it. He turned to Christianity

in its most paradoxical form as an escape from the inevitability of death; it was a gamble which henceforward continually allured him, but which he never really risked until that famous 'Going-out' a few days before his own death.

The immense, the overwhelming fact of death was precisely the one with which Shakespeare was pre-eminently concerned; and Shakespeare overcame it. That, I think, could be shown, though not, of course, by logical demonstration; it must suffice here to declare a conviction that the author of *Lear*, of *Antony and Cleopatra*, and *The Tempest* had achieved by successive stages a victory over death, in the sense that he had reasserted, rediscovered in the depths of his own being, without recourse to any revealed religion, the meaning of life which had been destroyed for him momentarily, as for Tolstoy permanently, by the realisation of death. The great difference between these great men is that Shakespeare fought out the desperate battle in his art. To his growing despairs and his painfully won triumphs he compelled his art to be adequate: and thereby he expanded the very fabric of art. Tolstoy, on the other hand, definitely and finally abandoned art at the clutch of despair. He was like a Shakespeare who should have written *Hamlet* and thrown in his hand. It was not surprising that his most flagrant critical injustice should have been done towards Shakespeare; nor can one help suspecting that behind the insensibility to Shakespeare, which he so freely displayed, lay concealed something more radical—a profound and perhaps unconscious resentment against one who had achieved a victory where he himself had confessed and even proclaimed defeat.

Tolstoy denied that the artist, who should elect to remain an artist, could achieve a higher life-conception than that contained in Christianity. There are many life-conceptions contained in Christianity, and perhaps it would be true to say that one of them—the most essential,

the one held by the founder of the Christian religion—cannot be and has not been surpassed. But, in the first place, that life-conception was not the life-conception of Tolstoy's own version of Christianity: his Christianity was shaped according to the pattern of his own secret despair—a religion of asceticism and abnegation. And, secondly, the revelation of the great artist is not of the same kind as the revelation of the great prophet. It may be akin and complementary to it, but it is not the same. The artist and the prophet, in their highest forms, do share that 'belief in an integral unity' which Baudelaire declared to be the necessary condition of a sound art; but the artist does not assert it, he reveals it in his representation of particulars.

The claim that post-Renaissance art should be judged good or bad by reference to the life-conception inculcated by Christianity is invalidated if it can be met by the counter-claim that not Christianity (Church or Tolstoyan) but post-Renaissance art itself contains and communicates the highest life-conception of which Western humanity has so far proved itself capable. And that is precisely the claim which can be made for the highest achievements of post-Renaissance art. In these man faces, without the adventitious aid of revealed religion, the 'burden of the mystery'; and the feelings which they communicate are not, as Tolstoy asserts, mere feelings of pleasure at beauty (the 'æsthetic emotions' of modern theory), but feelings of a different and higher order. It would be a derogation, or at least a falsification, of these feelings to call them specifically 'religious'; but it would be worse to deny the truth that they are allied to the 'religious' emotion. These feelings are hard, if not impossible, to define; but certainly they have never been better *described* than by Keats in his famous deduction from the effect produced upon him by *Lear*. 'The excellence of every art is its intensity, capable of making all disagreeables evaporate

from their being in close relationship with Beauty and Truth. Examine *King Lear* and you will find this exemplified throughout.' This mysterious identity of Beauty and Truth in the representation of life, and the equally mysterious power of seeing and then revealing that they are identical, are the real basis of the principle of the autonomy of art; by virtue of attaining this power the artist moves beyond the province of the moral and religious judgment—if he can attain it. For then he has fulfilled his final purpose, of revealing what the most exalted religion can only assert—that there is a meaning in life. And we, to whom he communicates his knowledge and his revelation, are no mere blind accepters of an oracle: we

‘take upon us the mystery of things

As if we were God’s spies’.

Thus Tolstoy’s claim that the feelings communicated by modern art must be judged good or bad by reference to the feelings inculcated by Christianity, because Christianity contains the highest life conception of which man is capable, falls to the ground because modern art, in its highest forms, itself contains the highest life-conception of which man is at present capable. If criticism would resolutely insist on a hierarchy of artistic achievement, and show reason for the order it established, it would quickly be evident that art is indeed autonomous, furnished with both the right and the power to judge its own unworthy members, and able to protect by a sort of benefit of clergy its less exalted forms against the presumptions of the moral judgment. For it could fairly be claimed for the art of literature at least, that in its elementary acts of perception—the seizing of a true and revealing metaphor, for example—it is, however unconsciously, prophetic of a belief in that ‘integral unity’ which at its highest it consciously perceives and deliberately reveals. ‘Every true metaphor’, said Baudelaire, ‘is drawn from the inexhaustible riches of the analogy of the universe.’

But it is evident that these feelings—above all the supreme feelings of the identity of Beauty and Truth in the particularity of the world—which modern art does at its highest communicate, are not feelings which ‘infect’ every man ‘independently of his state of development or education’. Never to have felt ‘the burden of the mystery’ at least is to be, as it were, disqualified from responding to such feelings, or recognising that they have been expressed. And from this we see the falsity of Tolstoy’s main dilemma.

‘If art is an important matter, a spiritual blessing essential for all men, then it should be accessible to every one: if, as in our day, it is not accessible to all men, then one of two things: either art is not the vital matter it is represented to be, or that art which we call art is not the real thing.’

Art *is* accessible to all men. That all men do not accede to it does not affect the fact of its universal accessibility. Certainly, if the feelings communicated by art were mere feelings, as Tolstoy believed or desired to believe, we should expect all men, irrespective of their development, to be affected by them. But they are not thus affected: and the conclusion is not that ‘the art which we call art is not the real thing’, but that the feelings communicated by art are not simply feelings. And indeed they manifestly are more than feelings. They partake of the nature of feelings, they partake of the nature of thoughts: yet they are neither the one nor the other. What are they?

About this vital point Tolstoy gropes. ‘The function of art’, he says, ‘lies just in this: to make that understood and felt which in the form of an argument would be incomprehensible and inaccessible. Usually it seems to the recipient of a truly artistic impression that he knew the thing before but had been unable to express it.’ The second sentence is a true description of the ‘artistic impression’, the first a manifestly false conclusion from it. Take a simple example:

‘We must endure  
Our going hence, even as our coming hither:  
Ripeness is all.’

These limpid lines achieve and reveal an identity of truth and beauty. Try to express what they say in the language of discourse; with your utmost efforts you will not avoid translating them into a declaration of Stoic indifferentism. What they actually convey is something totally different—a sense of acceptance of human destiny. They may be said to contain a thought; but not what they contain, but what they are, is of importance. They are of another nature than any *thought*.

Yet it would be true to say that it seems to the reader of those lines ‘that he knew the thing before, but had been unable to express it’. This is indeed a mark of ‘the truly artistic impression’. And Tolstoy is in this description remarkably at one with Keats in the first of his famous axioms on poetry.

‘First. I think poetry should surprise by a fine excess and not by singularity; it should strike the reader as a wording of his own highest thoughts, and appear almost a remembrance.’

From this singular characteristic of the true artistic impression Tolstoy makes two chief deductions. Both are false. One, that art supplies a comprehensible equivalent of what would be incomprehensible as an argument, he himself, as we have seen, elsewhere disowns. Another, that art should be comprehensible to any man whatever his level of development, depends on the assumption that art is an affair of mere emotion. That is manifestly wrong. The lines from *Lear*, which have been used as an example, do not communicate a mere feeling, any more than they convey a mere thought. What they communicate is something of a third kind, in which feeling and thought are inextricably blended.

By thus falsifying the peculiar and unique nature of the true artistic impression, and simplifying it to a mere



emotion, Tolstoy was enabled to deduce what he desired to deduce in order to justify his own despair of art: namely, that art was comprehensible to, and amenable to judgment by, 'the natural man'. Here the contrast between Tolstoy and Keats is in the highest degree illuminating: for Keats, who, as we have seen, agreed with Tolstoy in describing 'the true artistic impression', was also preoccupied with this question of the 'naturalness' of art. Witness his second and third axioms:

'Second. The touches of beauty should never be half-way, thereby making the reader breathless instead of content. The rise, the progress, the setting of Imagery should, like the sun, come natural to him, shine over him, and set soberly, although in magnificence, leaving him in the luxury of twilight. But it is easier to think what poetry should be than to write it. And this leads me to

Another axiom—That if poetry comes not as naturally as the leaves to a tree, it had better not come at all.'

Underlying all these *aperçus* of Keats is some conception or intuition of the 'naturalness' of poetry. Poetry comes naturally to the reader, its own internal progress is natural, and it comes from the poet himself as naturally as the leaves to a tree. But, unlike Tolstoy, Keats insists that what comes naturally to the reader is not what comes easy to him; it is 'his own highest thoughts'. Moreover, what comes naturally from the poet is not what comes easy from him. 'It is easier to think what poetry should be than to write it.'

Visibly Keats and Tolstoy have parted company. Whereas Tolstoy has persuaded himself that art, which is natural to man, is also easy to him—'it infects any man, whatever his plane of development'—Keats is instinctively proof against the false suggestion both as regards the reader and the writer. And Keats had to contend with the Tolstoyan æsthetic in his own time. The two contemporaries who for a time most influenced him, Leigh Hunt and Wordsworth, had both fallen into the ditch:

they had both convinced themselves that poetry should employ 'the real language of real people'. Moreover, only a month before the enunciation of his axioms, Keats had had to counter Hunt's criticism that the first book of *Endymion* was 'unnatural'. 'He must first prove', said Keats to his brother, 'that Caliban's poetry is unnatural. This with me completely overturns his objections.' One can hardly conceive a briefer or a better answer.

At this point the æsthetic question: 'What is the universality of art?' has manifestly resolved into the ethical question: 'What is natural to man?' And Tolstoy and Keats are making widely different answers. Tolstoy's is the simpler; it is Rousseau's answer. What is natural to man is what he approves 'independently of his state of development and education'. Keats' answer makes no such simple text for revolutionaries or *surréalistes*. What is natural to man is 'his own *highest* thoughts'.

One would not contend that Keats' answer, in these terms, is conclusive or even satisfactory. It would be easy to turn its point by pressing for an answer to the question: 'What are these high thoughts?' But we are already on ground where dialectic will not greatly avail to advance or discredit Keats' intuition. What is natural, for man and poet, according to Keats, is what is natural to them in a condition which both may achieve: of this condition poetry is to the reader as it were premonitory. He makes contact through it with his own highest thoughts, and it appears to him almost a remembrance.

The difference between this and the Rousseau-Tolstoy conception is vast. For Rousseau and for Tolstoy man becomes natural by becoming a barbarian. For Keats he becomes natural by advancing in some simple and mysterious way. What is this way of progress?

Keats' fundamental positions may be called intuitive, but they have commanded the assent of subsequent generations. Pure poetry comes naturally from the poet;

and comes naturally to the reader. What does he mean by *naturally*? Most probably, at the moment of enouncing his 'axioms' he did not know. Does *naturally* mean the same in both cases? Obviously the poet differs from the man, in that he is a poet. He *naturally* gives expression to something, and the something expressed comes *naturally* to his reader. This something is the reader's own 'highest thoughts'. The problem of poetic expression as such does not greatly concern Keats. For him, when true poetic expression comes, it comes naturally. But the essential poetic achievement is, in some sort, independent of the gift of poetic expression. This may seem a curious position for a poet and particularly for a poet like Keats to have taken; but that he did take it is incontrovertible. In the second *Hyperion*, the last of his long poems, in which he concentrated all his agonised speculations on the worth and destiny of the poet, he asserted the position unequivocally.

'Who alive can say  
 "Thou art no poet, mayst not tell thy dreams?"  
 Since every man whose soul is not a clod  
 Hath visions and would speak, if he had loved  
 And been well-nurtured in his mother tongue. . . .'

It remained from first to last central to all Keats' thinking on the poetic nature (which is the deepest of any known to me) that the poetic condition is attainable by all men—at a price. The price is that which he hints at in the strange lines above, which can only be interpreted in terms of his own biography. The soul of the man who would attain to the poetic condition must not be a clod; and he must have loved.

What Keats meant by love will be known to those familiar with his letters to Fanny Brawne: it was a complete self-surrender. What he meant by the soul, he had tried to explain some months before, at the moment when the agony of his love took hold of him, in a letter to his

brother (April, 1819). His conception of the soul, as might be expected, is exceedingly pertinent to his conception of the poetic condition as one attainable by all men. The soul is for Keats something which exists only potentially in man. In the natural man the division is twofold—into Heart, which he defines as ‘the seat of the Human passions’ and Mind. All direct sensational contact with the world of experience is made by the Heart; the true function of the Mind is to make this directly apprehended experience conscious. A man becomes natural by refusing to allow his Mind to become dominant and self-sufficient. If he can keep his Mind loyal to the experience of his Heart, then somehow the Soul is created. For a man to possess his Soul is to possess his Self, in the deepest sense of the word, and, mysteriously, at the moment of this Soul-possession, he sees the necessity and the beauty of the process by which he has come to achieve it. ‘Do you not see’, cries Keats to his brother in the middle of this letter on the world as a Vale of Soul-making, ‘how necessary a world of pains and troubles is to school an Intelligence and make it a Soul?’

Much could be written, and much in vain, on this strange letter of Keats. No mere analytical acumen will extract sustenance, or perhaps even a meaning, from it. It is obviously the record of a profound personal experience, an attempted statement of a process of self-creation which Keats had undergone. Therefore an intellectual criticism of it is condemned to futility. But its relevance to his conception of the poetic condition as *natural* to man is striking. It is, in Keats’ belief, natural to man that he should come to possess his soul; but this natural process is the very reverse of easy: it is, on the contrary, the hardest thing in the world, for it depends on the success of the heroic effort to keep the consciousness loyal to the unconsciousness. Out of this condition, if he can achieve it, the poet speaks; and the reader responds

to his utterance as to a wording of his own highest thoughts, because he feels that the condition which underlies the poet's utterance is premonitory of a condition to which he himself may attain. This condition is at once a condition of being and a condition of knowing. Only by having achieved his soul can the poet see the necessity and the beauty of the process by which he attained it. Keats' letter is indeed a fuller enunciation of Baudelaire's disconcerting (and therefore neglected) proposition: 'La première condition pour faire un art sain est la croyance à l'unité intégrale.'

The relevance of Keats' transcendental conception of the self-created soul (which, it must be emphasised, is not a speculation, but an attempted statement of an actual experience) to the problem what are the strange 'thought-feelings' communicated by a supreme work of literary art, is not far to seek. Here is a condition of being, natural to man in the sense that its attainment is the final end of a natural effort to harmonize the discrepant elements of heart and mind—a condition of being in which thought and feeling are united to form a third and distinct faculty of perception. And what is perceived by this self-created faculty is that 'integral unity', of which Baudelaire spoke. 'Do you not see that a world of pains and trouble is necessary to school an intelligence and make it a soul?' That is one, and perhaps the highest object of the new faculty. Not 'Do you not understand?' not 'Do you not feel?' but 'Do you not *see*?' But the true expression of this condition is not argument but art. Keats moved a great step nearer to it in the sonnet which he wrote immediately after his letter:

'How fevered is the man who cannot look  
Upon his mortal days with temperate blood!  
Who vexes all the leaves of his life's book  
And robs his fair name of its maidenhood. . . .'

And he advanced another and a still greater stride, in the

days immediately following, when he found in the Grecian urn the perfect symbol of that identity of Beauty and Truth he had struggled to discern, and by the searching sincerity of his effort, created the faculty to discern it.

‘Thou still unravished bride of quietness,  
Thou foster-child of silence and slow time. . . .’

# HINDU MUSIC

By STANLEY RICE

THE musical contest between Apollo and Marsyas is, we are told by learned Grecians, typical of the struggle between the Phrygian cult of Cybele, into whose services the flute was impressed, and the Greek or Ionic cult of that theocracy with which we are all familiar. It thus marks the transition from the lower conception of the worship of an Earth-Goddess (in conjunction with Attis) to the higher idea of adoration of the celestial phenomena, a transition which had already taken place in India at the time of the Rig-Veda, or rather of the composition of the hymns which form the collection known by that name. But may we not also, having regard to the source of the legend read into it an artistic interpretation? May we not suppose it equally to typify the victory of strings over wood wind, of elaborate art over the primitive sounds which are typified as well by Pan's pipes as by Marsyas' flute, and which by comparison may be called natural? It was surely not for nothing that the Greeks placed the lyre in the hands of Apollo, the brightest god of the Greek Pantheon, the Nature god, who pre-eminently gave light and health to the world, the supreme lord of music, under whose direction the Muses presided each over her separate branch.

*De te fabula.* This interpretation may or may not be correct, but it serves as a fitting illustration of Indian conceptions of music. For India, too, like Greece has given over music into the keeping of her favourite god, and like Greece she has exalted the plucked string far above the blown reed; for although it was the murali or flute that she bestowed upon Krishna instead of the lyre of Apollo, it is and has long been the vina, the sitar, the

sarangi and such stringed instruments, generally of the guitar family, which she has chosen for the expression of her highest music. Nevertheless it remains significant that in India as in Greece, as well as in Christian apocalypses, music alone of the arts is exalted to the heights of heaven, and that India has realised the vision of St. John in concentrating her music to the worship of the Almighty. For Indian legends tell us of the three arts of music, dancing and drama which were Siva's majestic gift to mankind, of the invention of the drum by Bramha, the Supreme God when the old Vedic nature gods had vanished into their twilight, and of Nataraja,<sup>1</sup> the Dancing God, who is not as a recent writer would have it, the Lord of Illusion, but the embodiment, as Professor Rothenstein has interpreted the images, of the cosmic harmony and the symbol of unceasing movement.

These things have been set down with no intention to charm the reader with semi-poetical rhapsodies on the early history of Indian music, but rather to lend emphasis to the point that there is evidently something of the divine in an art which to India is an object always of love and often of almost ecstatic adoration, and yet to European ears nothing but a jumble of thin and unrelated sound. 'To me', said an Indian to the writer, '*music is the ladder that reaches from earth to heaven,*' and in the legend of Krishna and the Gopis, overlaid though it be with sensuous distortions, we may perhaps see the Hindu attempt to represent the power of divine music over the minds of the rustic and unsophisticated girls, chosen possibly as the mentally ruder half of mankind, just as in Greece the lute of Orpheus was said to have charmed the brute creation. For although religion is bound up with every phase of Indian life, and although music in India as in Greece was, at any rate in early times, made the hand-maid of religion the object of introducing the flute

<sup>1</sup> A form of Siva.



into the story is not apparent except upon some such hypothesis.

Be this as it may, there is no question that the music of India has laid hold upon the people in a far higher degree than has the sister art upon any of the peoples of Europe unless it be Germany. Yet to the majority of Europeans Indian music is not merely distasteful but abhorrent—a jumble of unmeaning noise without phrase or rhythm, and in the case of the singers accompanied by ludicrous contortions and produced by methods which are contrary to all accepted canons of taste—a thing to be despised, a thing not worth study either as a science or an art. The inability to appreciate Eastern music has been summed up by an old writer on the subject under four heads: 'first, ignorance, in which I include the not having had opportunities of hearing the best performers; secondly, natural prepossession against Hindoostanee' (which may well include all Indian)<sup>1</sup> 'music; thirdly, inattention to its beauties . . . fourthly, incapacity of comprehension'.

It is related that the Emperor of China once rebuked a French bishop for presuming to criticise that which he could not possibly understand. The remark may aptly be applied to European estimates of Indian music. What nine-tenths and more of the European community call music is the harsh and discordant noise that accompanies processions—weddings, funerals, the progress of a god—in which, apart from any indifference of execution, music as music plays but a secondary part. The primary objects are twofold: the first, to create the required atmosphere of joy or mourning or devotion, the second, to drown the malign suggestions of evil spirits as expressed in inauspicious sounds. In the march past of a military band in England, or in the ball room dance music as such is likewise secondary, though the objects may be different;

<sup>1</sup> Mohammedan also. There are two Schools of Hindu music—Northern and Southern.

and since we should protest against the shallow judgment which estimated the art of Europe by such examples as these, is not India, too, justified in protesting that her art should not be judged by what is not and does not pretend to be music? We may pass lightly over the second and third of our author's category, for in fact they are included in the last. It is true that it is very difficult to hear the best performers, but even when one is so privileged, the music touches no emotional chord, not necessarily though perhaps not infrequently, from any prejudice against it, and less from inattention to its beauties than from sheer ignorance of the kind of beauty to be expected.

To the proper appreciation of Indian music the listener must bring an open mind, purged of all preconceived notions of music, and that is a hard thing to do. The panegyrists of Indian music have sometimes appealed to Nature to prove their case. They declare that the human voice transcends any instrument of man's invention, and that the sounds of Nature are melodic rather than harmonic. And since a large part—perhaps the greater part—of Indian music is vocal and all of it is melodic, it approaches very nearly to the natural ideal, and, we must suppose, is logically superior to all harmonic and instrumental music. The argument is false, not to say absurd. When man comes into competition with Nature on the same ground, we may freely admit that Nature is always victorious. The Emperor of China in the old tale turned with relief from the mechanical toy to the real bird. No statue, however perfect, can ever hope to rival the perfection of the human form, and no instrument, however ingenious, can hope to imitate the human voice successfully. These examples can be summed up in the general statement that the imitation cannot rival the original. But music, if the divinest, is also the most artificial of the arts. There is no sort of relation between the harmonic masterpieces of Western music and the sounds of Nature,

nor is there any sound in Nature at all comparable in kind to the music of the violin, the cornet or the Indian vina. They are no more like the song of the birds than they are like the scream of a railway engine; they are no more like the sound of the sea than they are like the sound of an aeroplane. If there were really any foundation for the assertions that vocal music and melody are superior to instrumental music and harmony, the greatest masterpieces would as nearly as is compatible with a harmonic system conform to this type. As a matter of fact they do not. Schubert is the master of song, unapproached by anyone save Schumann, but Schubert is not our greatest composer. Mendelssohn gave us such lovely melody as the Andante of the Violin Concerto, yet Mendelssohn's place is comparatively lowly. Even Mozart, a master of melody, is at his best in such a work as the G minor symphony. The real masterpieces of music are typified by the Choral Symphony of which critics call the choral movement the weakest, and for the piano the tempestuous B flat Sonata or some of the greatest of Chopin's work who never wrote for anything else.

Here then is one reason why the European lover of music cannot fully appreciate the Indian art; he does not recognise in it the elements of greatness. For Indian music is entirely melodic, and to those to whom harmonic structure has become second nature, a melodic composition supported only by a drone and a drum sounds thin and unsubstantial. There is moreover a want of variety. Indian music was in its origin purely religious, and was used like the Greek music to which it seems to be so closely related, as a medium for conveying religious instruction, not perhaps by the inculcation of religious doctrine as by familiarising the mind to worship. It was in the most literal sense a sacrifice of song. Later on, and especially when the Mohammedan conquerors arose with their æsthetic taste and their iconoclastic fervour, music

was diverted into an erotic channel, and this diversion was favoured by a general decadence in Hindu religion and in Hindu art. In those two main streams the devotional and the erotic, if we put aside the folk song and the ballad music of which there seems to be plenty, Indian classical music has flowed ever since.

That both music and painting have owed much to religious influence in Europe is not to be denied, but it is equally true to say that after each had reached a certain point that influence was sterilising. It is significant that the symbols 'sol-fa', which are still in use, are the opening syllables of two lines from a Hymn to St. John, and that early music was regulated by Papal decrees from the fetters of which musicians were constantly struggling to be free. But as music broadened out under the influence of Haydn in absolute music, and of Glück in opera, Europe became gradually enriched by Symphonies, Operas, Sonatas, Chamber music and secular songs until it attained that wealth of variety that we can hear in any concert room to-day.

It may, however, be objected that, no matter what the musical mind may think, any plain man loves a tune and can recognise one when he hears it: Indian music has no tune. Now it will be noted that owing chiefly to its artificial character music is of all the arts the most difficult to understand or to capture. A painting or a statue is a representation of Nature, and it is none the less so when it is symbolic, because man thinks in terms of the phenomenal. A picture may be a more or less faithful reproduction of land or sea-scape which, making allowance for atmosphere and geography, can be so recognised all the world over. And if you wish to convey some spiritual idea you will still go, as Watts did, to the human form or to Nature. Even in literature, though without so perfect a knowledge as to enable you to appreciate the subtleties of style, you can yet grasp the ideas with a

comparatively superficial knowledge of the author's tongue. But in music the sound is too fleeting and the language too difficult for a due appreciation unless after repeated hearings. This is a common experience even among concert goers; the pieces we enjoy the most are those we know the best, and no one has any right to criticise that which he hears for the first time. It is very rare that you can hear the same piece twice over in India, partly because you do not know what to ask for and partly because in the absence of notation there is no guide.

But the true reason why the European cannot distinguish a tune is that Indian music differs so widely both in tone and in time. It is no part of the purpose of this paper to plunge into technicalities, but one or two elementary facts must be set down for the proper development of the argument. Indian melody then depends upon the *rāgam*, an elusive term for which there is no satisfactory definition, and which has been called a 'mode', an 'air', and a 'melody-type'. A recent writer defines it thus: 'Rāgas are different series of notes within the octave which form the basis of all Indian melodies, and are differentiated from each other by the prominence of certain fixed notes and by the sequence of particular notes.' One might almost call one aspect of them the permutations of every tone and semitone within the octave, and the identity of some of them with some of the Church modes has clearly led to the use of that word. The result, however, is to introduce an immense variety of scale, if the word may be used, as compared with our two or three within the octave, and therefore to produce what to our ears is a discord. The most widely known fact on the other hand is the use of microtones for almost anyone will exclaim at once 'Indian music? Oh yes, that has quarter tones.' As a matter of fact these quarter tones are very little used except for grace; that is to say that they correspond rather to the passing than to the structural notes of European composition.

And further, the all important difference in time-measures makes it exceedingly difficult to grasp the rhythm. We are so accustomed to the bar rhythm with the accent on the first beat, that it is almost impossible to get it out of our heads; yet it is this accent which we must think away if we are to realise and appreciate Indian time measures. As Mr. Fox-Strangways<sup>1</sup> has said, 'In order to get the sense of duration we have to get rid of stress.'

Far therefore from being a jumble of unrelated sound governed by an indistinguishable rhythm, Indian music is very highly systematised, and is in fact far more elaborate up to this limit than our own. If you are listening to an Indian composition, you will catch yourself trying to capture some phrase or to beat some time, and generally the tune and the time escape you. But they do not escape the Indian audience. Some will be loudly keeping the time with their hands, others will be less obtrusively following it with their heads, one or two will be humming the melody as certain irritating people do in Europe, and all will be rapt in a pure ecstasy of sound. For it is well to remember—and the fact emphasises mutual difficulties—that to the average Indian European music is as discordant, as ugly, as unmeaning as is Indian music to the European. The love songs of Europe—Schubert's Serenade let us say, or Schumann's wonderful cycle of the 'Dichterliebe'—seem to him so much jargon. Their time, their key, their tone have no meaning, and the whole is little better than the serenade of a tom-cat to his lady on the house-top.

Yet another reason for divergence of view is to be found in the scale of values to be placed upon the artistic elements of a composition. Europe takes technique for granted; their due meed of praise is given to artists who have mastered the technical difficulties of compositions beyond the range of less skilful players, and it is recog-

<sup>1</sup> *The Music of Hindustan* (Oxford, 1914).

nised that no one ought to attempt to interpret music who has not first made himself note and time-perfect. But this is regarded as merely the foundation. We set great value upon fidelity to the composer; it is an artistic crime to take liberties with his work. Niceties of tone, of tempo, of expression, must be left to the individual temperament of the artist, and it is ultimately by these that his work is judged. Indian standards of value are wholly different. The important things are accuracy and dexterity, both in the execution of the composition and in the management of the often very complicated time. Tone appears to be of little consequence; the fluency of Indian playing of the violin, which is so well adapted to the florid grace of quarter tones, is astonishing, but neither the quality of the instrument nor the tonal quality of the playing seems to enter into their estimates. Similarly the voice production seems to European ears to be forced and unpleasantly nasal; to an Indian the thing that really matters is that the song should not be out of tune nor out of time, and hence the methods to ensure accuracy of time are to the Westerner like the scaffolding of a building—ugly accessories only to be tolerated during the period of practice. Lastly—for we must omit minor differences in taste—the Indian looks upon extreme fidelity to the composer as an unjustifiable restriction upon the artistry of the executant. To a superlative dexterity he would add superlative ingenuity; the great artist is he who can make the most pleasing or the most inspiring variations on the composer's work. It is said that a musician on trial, being called upon to play a few bars of the Overture to the Lobgesang, introduced a flourish, whereupon Mendelssohn politely bade him good morning. An Indian would probably have reckoned the novelty as at least a sign of originality, and would have welcomed it as such.

And what is the meaning of the music? What message

has it for that enthusiastic audience whose emotions it has so visibly stirred? It would be presumptuous for an Englishman, who has to confess that here is an art which he can admire, but which moves him not at all to venture upon any explanation of his own. It is more fitting that an Indian should speak, and who is more competent than Sir Rabindranath Tagore? 'At first', he is reported to have said, 'your Western music jarred upon me. I heard Madame Albani sing a song in which there was an imitation of the nightingale. It was so childishly imitative of the mere externals of Nature that I could take little pleasure in it.' In that song of the nightingale he went on, in answer to question, 'a Hindu would find the soul state of the listener; he would make music in the same way that Keats wrote his ode. It seems to me that Indian music concerns itself more with human experience as interpreted by religion than with experience in an everyday sense. For us music has above all a transcendental significance. It disengages the spiritual from the happenings of life; it sings of the relationship of the human soul with the soul of things beyond. The world by day is like European music; a flowing concourse of vast harmony composed of concord and discord and many disconnected fragments. And the night world is our Indian music; one pure, deep and tender raga. They both stir us, yet the two are contradictory in spirit. But that cannot be helped. . . . We men of India live in the realm of night; we are overpowered by the sense of the One and Infinite. Our music draws the listener away beyond the limits of everyday human joys and sorrows, and takes us to that lonely region of renunciation which lies at the root of the Universe, while European music leads us a variegated dance through the endless rise and fall of human grief and joy.'

Is this only the rhapsody of a poet-musician? We can hardly think so, though there are not many of us, brown or white, who could so ably express the feelings that are



in us. The same impression has been left upon Western writers upon the subject; it may be that they have only been echoing what Indians have said or have read into the music what they have been taught to look for. Certain it is, however, that there is something weird, something mysterious, and yet always plaintive and pathetic in these Indian airs, which, elusive as the actual melodies may be, leaves behind it a spiritual impression such as that of which Tagore speaks. It is, too, in entire consonance with all we know of India. For indefinite as is the influence of nationality, it is always there; the national character seems to stamp itself upon the national music. There is a joyousness, a directness of purpose in English music which seems to reflect the straightforward, rather unimaginative English character, just as German music reflects—or did reflect before Germany abandoned music for the pursuit of power—the German introspection and concentrated thought. If the sunny skies of Italy have called forth sometimes sweet and rather cloying melodies and sometimes brilliant if careless and superficial song, if the elaborate culture of France prefers somewhat artificial elegancies, the music of Russia seems to be the echo of a deep despair; a despair which finds its gloomiest expression in the funeral darkness of the close of Tchaikowsky's B minor symphony, and which may be due to the workings partly of inhospitable nature and partly of inhospitable man. The search for the Infinite has been the age-long preoccupation of thoughtful India, the attainment of Release from the bondage of the flesh her most ardent desire. The cold, unimpassioned reasoning of her philosophers gave way in the course of centuries to the period of ecstatic devotion known as Bhakti—a period in which reason was swallowed up in passionate adoration and logic was lost in emotional faith and love. To the European mind no very great heights can be reached by the thin tinkle of a plucked instrument, reinforced

though it be by the drone, and by the drum which plays a much more important and a more subjective part than it does in Europe. But the Indian does not think so. If he appreciated at all the sonorous quality of Western music, he would probably prefer the pensive reflection of Schubert's Unfinished Symphony to the gigantic importance of the C minor or the joyous riot of the Symphony in A; he would probably prefer the quiet melody of 'O rest in the Lord' to the fiery warning of 'Who may abide?'; the plaintive grace of Chopin's funeral March to the solemn grandeur of the Trauermarsch of Götterdämmerung. What he would not admire at all is the Pastoral Symphony, especially the call of the cuckoo and the nightingale in the Brook scene, the murmuring of the trees in Siegfried or the flicker of flame in Die Walküre. Tagore is altogether in earnest—and his words would be echoed by all Indian musicians—when he says that a Hindu 'would find the soul state of the listener; he would make music in the same way that Keats wrote his ode.' In sculpture, as in music, the Indian looks upon the mere imitation of Nature as something paltry and trivial, unworthy of the true genius of man. The perfection of the human form which made so strong an appeal to Greek æstheticism, does not appeal to him at all. He looks beyond the form to the spirit behind the veil of flesh, and sometimes only to the idea of which the form is a symbol. That is why the figure of Buddha is not Gautama, but the Impersonation of the Contemplative Mind, the dancing Siva is not the god but the embodiment of cosmic motion, the praying Hanuman not the Monkey God but the Spirit of Devotion. The multiplication of arms represents Omnipotence or Divine Energy, of heads Omniscience or Divine Wisdom. The Indian cares little for form, though in music the innate conservatism has retained the old rules and the old structure; but as he scorns to imitate Nature in his sculpture, so he scorns to depict her in music.

Nor does he confine himself to Nature; he would equally scorn the descriptive music which suggests merely the low doings of man. The braying of the Ass and the rustic theme of the Athenian bumpkins from Warwickshire in the Overture to the *Midsummer Night's Dream* would alike be abhorrent to him. Rapt in his own divine art of music he would fain 'fade away into the forest dim.

Fade far away, dissolve and quite forget  
What thou among the leaves hast never known  
The weariness, the fever and the fret  
Here where men sit and hear each other groan.'

It is not likely that such an art, so far removed in every respect from all the traditions of Western music, will ever have much vogue in Europe. Perhaps it is as well that this should be so, so long as we recognise that it is an art and do not despise what we do not understand, for it is better that all art should develop upon national lines and should be a reflection of the national character. But as our knowledge of the East grows there seem to be traces of the influence of Indian music in the modern art of Europe. The so-called formlessness of many recent compositions is probably not formlessness at all, but a new kind of form to which we have not yet grown accustomed, and the frequent abandonment of anything that can definitely be called a theme may in like manner come to be better appreciated when it ceases to be an innovation. The free treatment of time-measures which, in the case of Schönberg, has occasionally gone so far as the rejection of a time-signature and the return to a form of scale older than the accepted major and minor modes are further characteristics of modern schools. All these things suggest a certain subtle influence of the Oriental art—a suggestion which is reinforced by the adoption of such themes as Strauss' 'Tod und Verklärung' and 'Zarathustra', though against these may be set such ultra-

realism as we find in the 'Bœuf sur le Toit' and the 'Sinfonia Domestica'. Indeed Mr. Rollo Myers, in a little book on Modern Music, has gone so far as to declare that 'the modern tendency is to use art as a kind of spiritual camera to photograph external facts and register the impressions received from them as impersonally and objectively as possible'. It is in any case beyond dispute that the vogue of Russian music, as exemplified by Tchaikowsky, Scriabin, Moussorgsky, Rimsky-Korsakov and Stravinsky, has had a great influence on modern musical output, and there is a considerable affinity between Russian folk-song and Oriental music. We have it on the authority of M. A. Rimsky-Korsakov, son of the composer, that folk-song in Russia is based on scales 'which differ essentially from our accepted major and minor scales', and are founded upon the old tetrachord, that they prefer conjunct to disjunct music, that is, that they avoid wide intervals and that they 'show a passion for melisma—delicate embellishment of the fundamental melodies'. He adds that they have peculiar time structures such as  $7/4$  and  $5/4$ , and that 'we can trace in the songs the most inconceivable rhythmic variants of the fundamental melodies'. It is admitted that the Russian schools from Glinka to Rimsky-Korsakov, with the exception of Tchaikowsky, whose musical outlook was partly German and of Scriabin, an eccentric genius who was more or less a law unto himself, reflect these peculiarities of folk-song, and since what has been written of Russia might almost equally have been written of India, it is difficult to resist the conclusion that the music of Europe is looking towards the East through the eyes of a people that is more than half Asiatic.

# DOSTOEVSKY ON 'THE BROTHERS KARAMASOV'

[*Translated by S. S. KOTELIANSKY*]

[Hitherto unpublished letters, written by F. M. Dostoevsky during the years 1879-1881 to N. A. Liubimov, the associate editor of the *Russky Vestnik*.

The whole year 1878 Dostoevsky spent in writing *The Brothers Karamasov*. The serial publication of the novel and continuous work on it took him another two years, 1879 and 1880.

*The Brothers Karamasov* was published in *The Russky Vestnik* (NN. 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10 and 11 of 1879; NN. 1, 4, 7, 9, 10 and 11 of 1880)].

Staraia Roussa,  
May 10th, 1879.

THIS book, 'Pro and Contra', is in my view the culminating point of the novel, and it must be finished with particular care. Its idea, as you will see from the text I have sent you, is the presentation of extreme blasphemy and of the seeds of the idea of destruction at present in Russia among the young generation that has torn itself away from reality. Alongside with blasphemy and anarchism there is the refutation of them, which is now being prepared by me and will be expressed in the last words of the dying Zosima, one of the characters of the novel. Since the difficulty of the task undertaken by me is obvious, you will certainly understand, much-respected Nicolay Alexeyevich, and excuse me for preferring to extend this part to two numbers, rather than to spoil the culminating chapter by hurry. On the whole the chapter will be full

of movement. In the copy I have just sent you, I present only the character of one of the leading figures of the novel, that character expressing his basic convictions. These convictions form what I consider as the *Synthesis* of contemporary Russian anarchism. The denial not of God, but of the meaning of his creation. The whole of socialism sprang up and started with the denial of the meaning of historical actuality, and arrived at the program of destruction and anarchism. The principal anarchists were, in many cases, sincerely convinced men. My hero takes a theme, in my view, an unassailable one: the senselessness of the suffering of children, and from it deduces the absurdity of the whole of historical actuality. I do not know if I have accomplished this well, but I know that the figure of my hero is real in the highest degree. (In *The Devils* there were a number of characters, for which I was reproached on the ground that they were fantastic; then afterwards, would you believe it, they all proved to be real, therefore they must have been truthfully divined. K. P. Pobedonoszev, for instance, told me of two or three cases of imprisoned anarchists who were astonishingly like those presented by me in *The Devils*). All that is being said by my hero, in the copy I sent you, is based on actuality. All the incidents about the children actually happened, and were published in the newspapers, and I can show where they happened—I did not invent them. The General, who set his dogs on a child, and the whole circumstance, is an actual fact which was made public last winter, I believe, in *The Archiv*, and was reproduced in many papers. And my hero's blasphemy will be triumphantly refuted in the next (June) number, on which I am working now with fear, trembling and awe, as I consider my task (the refutation of anarchism) a civic exploit. Do wish me success, much-respected Nicolay Alexeyevich.

In the copy I sent you I believe there is not a single *indecent* word. There is only one thing. A child of five,

for not having asked for the chamber-pot at night is smeared all over with her own excrement by the tormentors who have brought her up. But I beg you, I implore you not to strike this out. It is taken from a criminal case, recently tried. In all the newspapers (only two months ago, see *Golos*, the article 'The Mecklenburgh Mother') the word excrement was used. It can't be softened, it would be a great pity to do so. Surely we are not writing for children of ten. Still, I am convinced that even without my request you will preserve my whole text intact.

One more trifle. The lackey Smerdiakov sings a lackey's song, and in it is the couplet:

'A glorious crown,  
So long as my dearie's well.'

I have not invented the song, but heard and recorded it in Moscow. I heard it forty years ago. It was originally composed by shop assistants, and then it was taken up by lackeys; it was never recorded by collectors of folk songs, and I record it for the first time.

The actual text of the couplet is:

'A Tsar's crown,  
So long as my dearie's well.'

And, therefore, if you find it convenient, keep, for goodness sake, the word 'Tsar's' instead of 'glorious,' as I altered the word in case of necessity. . . .

Staraia Roussa,

June 11th, 1879.

The day before yesterday I sent to the editorial office of *The Russky Vestnik* the continuation of *The Karamasovs* for the June number (the end of Chapter 'Pro and Contra'). In it is finished what *the lips speak proudly and blasphemously*. The modern *denier*, the most vehement one, straightaway supports the advice of the devil, and asserts that that is a surer way of bringing happiness to mankind than Christ

is. For our Russian socialism, stupid, but terrible (for the young are with it)—there is here a *warning*, and I think a forcible one. Bread, the tower of Babel (i.e. the future kingdom of socialism), and the completest overthrow of freedom of conscience—that is what the desperate denier and atheist arrives at. The difference only being that our socialists (and they are not only the underground nihilists—you are aware of that) are conscious Jesuits and liars, who will not confess that their ideal is the ideal of the violation of man's conscience and of the reduction of mankind to the level of a herd of cattle. But my socialist (Ivan Karamasov) is a sincere man who frankly confesses that he agrees with the 'Grand Inquisitor's' view of mankind, and that Christ's religion (as it were) has raised man much higher than man actually stands. The question is forced home: 'Do you despise or respect mankind, you, its coming saviours?'

And they do all this in the name of the love of mankind, as if to say: 'Christ's law is difficult and abstract, and for weak people intolerable;' and instead of the law of liberty and enlightenment they bring to mankind the law of chains and of subjection by means of bread.

In the next book will take place the death of Zosima and his conversations with his friends before his death. It is not a sermon, but a story, an account of his own life. If I succeed, I shall achieve a good work: *I will compel people to admit* that a pure, ideal Christian is not an abstraction, but a vivid reality, possible, clearly near at hand, and that Christianity is the sole refuge of the Russian land from all its evils. I pray God that I may succeed, for the part will be a pathetic one. If only I can get sufficient inspiration! And the main theme is such, that it does not even occur to the mind of anyone of contemporary writers and poets, therefore it is quite *original*. For its sake the whole novel is being written. If only I can succeed: that is what troubles me now. I shall send it on



for the July number, and not later than the 10th. I shall try my best to do so. . . .

Staraja Roussa,  
July 8th, 1879.

. . . I would ask you not to demand the continuation of *The Karamasovs* for this month (July). It is nearly ready and, with a certain effort, I could send it you this month. But the important thing *to me* is that I consider that part ('Pater Seraphicus, The Death of Zosima') one of the culminating points of the novel, and therefore I should like to polish it as well as I can, to go over it and to have another look at it. I take it with me to Ems, and from Ems I shall send it to the *Russky Vestnik* not later than August the 10th or the 12th, that is, you will have it in your office by that date. So it can appear in the *Russky Vestnik* on August 31st (about three folios). Then will follow Book VII, in your September and October numbers (two and a half folios each month). I declare beforehand that it will produce an effect, and with Book VII, Part II of *The Brothers Karamasov* will end.

And now I come to the main point! The novel has also a Part III (not so big in the number of pages, as Part II, but of the same size as Part I). Finish it this year I positively cannot. When I sat down to write the novel, I failed to take into consideration my physical powers. Besides, I began working much more slowly, and, finally, I am taking this work of mine more seriously than I have taken any previous work; I want to finish it well, and there is an idea in it which I should like to set forth as clearly as possible. In it will take place the trial and verdict, and the building up of one of the leading characters (of Ivan Karamasov). In a word, I consider it my duty to inform you of and to ask your consent to the following arrangement. After finishing Part II (in the October number) I shall stop till next year. Part III will be finished

—and with it the novel will be concluded—in January, February and March (not later), perhaps even in January and February of next year. But in order that the newspapers should not blame the editors of *The Russky Vestnik* (as they did when *Anna Karenin* was running as a serial) for deliberately protracting the serial run of the novel, I propose in your October number of this year, that is, with the end of Part II, to publish a letter in your issue, under my signature, in which I shall apologise for not being able to finish my work this year [on account of my health], and tell the public that I alone am to blame. I shall send you this letter for your previous approval. As I consider all this very important to myself, I would ask you, much respected Nicolay Alexeyevich, to let me hear from you if only in a brief note. For certain personal reasons it seems to me that my plan is *the best for me in my position*, nor can I see any other way out of it. . . .

Ems,

August 7th, 1879.

I hasten to send you Book VI of *The Karamasovs* to be published in No. 8 of the *Russky Vestnik*. I have called that Book *The Russian Monk*, a bold and provocative title, for all the critics who do not like us will cry out: 'Is the Russian Monk like that, how dared he put him on such a pedestal?'

But the better if they do cry out, is it not so? (And I know that they will not be able to contain themselves.) I think I have not sinned against reality: it is true not only as an ideal, but it is true as a reality.

I only wonder if I have succeeded. I myself think that I have not expressed even a tenth part of what I wanted. Yet I regard Book VI as a culminating point of the novel. You will understand that a great deal in the precepts of my Zosima (or, rather, the manner of their expression) belongs to his character, that is, to the artistic

presentation of his character. Although I myself hold the same opinions, which he expresses, yet if I expressed them personally *from myself*, I should express them in a different form and in a different style. But he *could not* speak in a different style, nor *express himself in a different spirit*, than the one which I have given him. Otherwise the imaginative character would not be created. Such for instance, are Zosima's views on *what is a monk*, or on *servants and masters*, or on *can one be the judge of another* and so on. I took the figure and character from among the old Russian monks and prelates. With profound humility he has boundless, naive hopes of the future of Russia, of her moral and even political mission. St. Sergius, Bishops Peter and Alexey, have they not always regarded Russia in that light?

I ask you very much (I implore you) to give the proofs to a good reader, as, being abroad, I cannot go through them myself. Especially do I draw your attention to proofs 10 to 17 (*Of Holy Writ in the life of Father Zosima*). This chapter is enthusiastic and poetic; the model is certain sermons of Tikhon Zadonsky's, and the naive exposition is in the spirit of the book *The Pilgrimages of the Monk Parfeni*. . . . Look through the proofs yourself, be a benefactor. . . .

Petersburg,

April 13th, 1880.<sup>1</sup>

. . . I am glad that you like the young boys. Your opinion of Kolya Krasotkin I am quite ready to share.

<sup>1</sup>There is extant a whole series of letters, written by Dostoevsky to the same correspondent, bearing not only on the essential points, but also on mere technical details of *The Brothers Karamasov*, as for instance, the details about the legal procedure and the trial of Dmitri Karamasov; medical and expert opinion as to the true presentation of Ivan Karamasov's nightmare, etc., etc. This letter is a typical instance of Dostoevsky's preoccupation with the slightest details of *The Karamasovs*.

But here is the trouble: I forgot to correct something in the proofs which I have already returned to you to-day. Could my mistake be corrected and will you have the time to see to the correction yourself? And would it trouble you (if you had the time) to change the figure, i.e. to add to Kolya's age one year, in several passages of the book? First, in the opening of his biography, on p. 1, where it says that Mme. Krasotkin's husband died many years ago. It should read *thirteen* years. . . . In a word, add one year to Kolya's age so that although thirteen, he is nearly fourteen, i.e. he will be fourteen in a fortnight.

Staraja Roussa,  
August 10th, 1880.

. . . I do not know how you regard Chapter IX ('Ivan's Nightmare'). You would perhaps call it too characteristic! But really I did not want to appear 'original'. But I consider it my duty to tell you that I have asked the opinion of medical men (and more than one). They agree that not only such nightmares, but even hallucinations are possible before 'white delirium'. My hero, of course, has hallucinations too, but he mixes them up with his nightmares. Not only the physical (morbid) trait, when a man begins at times to lose the distinction between the real and the ghostly (which has happened to every one once in life), but also the spiritual trait is in keeping with the character of the hero: denying the reality of the ghost, yet, when the ghost has disappeared, insisting on its reality. *Tormented by unbelief, yet (unconsciously) wishing at the same time that the ghost were not a phantasy, but something real.*

Well, why go on talking. On reading it, you will see. But forgive my *devil*: he is only a devil, a pettifogging devil, and not Satan with 'singed wings'. I do not think the chapter too tedious, though it is rather long. Nor

do I think that there is anything in it which will not pass the censor, except perhaps the words: 'the hysterical screams of the cherubim'. I beg you, pass them: surely it is the *devil* speaking, and he can't speak differently. But if you cannot possibly let them stand, then instead of 'hysterical screams', put 'joyous cries'. But perhaps you can leave 'screams'. Otherwise it will sound too prosaic and out of tone.

I do not think that any of my devil's chatter will fail to pass the censor. The two stories about the confession-boxes, although in a lighter vein, yet, I think, are not salacious. Does not Mephistopheles fire off in both parts of *Faust* more risky things?

I consider that, in Chapter X and last, Ivan Karamasov's spiritual state is made sufficiently clear, consequently also his nightmare in Chapter IX. On the medical side, I repeat again, I had it verified by professional opinion.

Although I myself consider that Chapter IX (The Nightmare) might have been left out, yet somehow I wrote it *with pleasure*, and I do not at all disown it. . . .

Petersburg,

November 8th, 1880.

I am sending you the Epilogue to *The Karamasovs*, with which the novel comes to an end. . . . Please send me two sets of proofs. I need the second set for a public reading at the end of November. . . . I shall read the second chapter: 'Ilyushechka's Funeral, and Aliosha's Speech to the Boys'. I know from experience that such passages produce an impression at a public reading.

Well, the novel is finished! I worked at it for three years, two of which went in publishing it—a momentous time for me. I want to bring it out in book form by Christmas. It is in great demand here, as also

among the booksellers in the provinces; they are sending money.<sup>1</sup>

Let me not say good-bye to you! Indeed, I intend to live another twenty years and to go on writing.<sup>2</sup>

I meant to go to Moscow immediately after finishing *The Karamasovs*, but it seems I shall not be able to do so. I press your hand firmly and thank you for your sympathy. And also for your editorial ferule: I need it at times.

Petersburg,

January 26th, 1881.<sup>3</sup>

Much respected Nicolay Alexeyevich,

Since you have been so long and so often ever considerate of all my requests, may I reckon once more on your attention and help in this, perhaps my last, request? According to the account sent me by the *Russky Vestnik*, I have to receive for *The Karamasovs* another four thousand roubles odd. I now need money badly. Kindly inform Michael Nikiforovich of this. Could you please instruct the editorial office to send me that amount? You can't think how much this would oblige me. I am just about to make a certain purchase and I need money extremely, otherwise I may miss the chance.

Forgive me for not waiting for money from the office of *The Russky Vestnik*, and for expediting the matter by

<sup>1</sup> *The Brothers Karamasovs*, in book form, was published, in two volumes, with a dedication to Mme. Dostoevsky, at the end of 1880, in Petersburg. (Published by the Dostoevskies).

<sup>2</sup> Dostoevsky died two months and three weeks after writing these words.

<sup>3</sup> This letter is written in the author's firm, distinct and almost caligraphic handwriting. Only the sentence, 'this perhaps my last request', sounds ominous, for Dostoevsky died two days later, January 28th, 1881.

making this request. I would not do it if I had not a particular need.

My deepest respect to your wife, and pray convey my respect to Michael Nikiforovich.

With the deepest respect and true devotion.

# MUSIC

## A CONTEMPORARY OF THE TUDORS

PROFESSOR WEISSMANN, in his 'Problems of Modern Music' (J. M. Dent), which will be noticed more fully in a future number, and Mr. E. J. Dent, in his preface to the English translation, agree that no such general upheaval has taken place in the art of music for three centuries, as that which we are witnessing now. The peculiar value of Professor Weissmann's book lies in its careful analysis of antecedent causes. It is also true that the revival of what in England is called 'Tudor Music' is of interest not only for the quantity of fine music it has unearthed, but also for the light it throws on the disruptive forces which brought about the musical revolution of 1600. There is a danger, however, of Tudor music coming to be regarded as a water-tight compartment; fatuous phrases, such as 'Byrd, the English Palestrina', only confuse the issue. Palestrina is a man of whom everyone has heard, but he was by no means the only composer, or even the best composer, of his time. His 'legend' was invented a hundred years ago by Baini, by the simple process of suppressing everything that was to the credit of his contemporaries. Only of late years has it been realised that Roland de Lassus (Orlando Lasso) was a greater 'all-round' musician than Palestrina, Victoria a more inspired church-composer, and Marenzio a greater madrigalist. One of the 'antecedent causes' of these men was the Spaniard, Christopher Morales.

To an English audience the name Morales will immediately suggest that of Mr. Pedro García Morales, who, by his concerts of modern Spanish music, organised for charitable purposes during the war, first made us acquainted with Albéniz, Granados, Falla, Turina and Esplá.



The other Morales demands considerable research. There is not merely the difficulty of discovering the biographical facts of a man who lived four hundred years ago. His works cannot even be read, much less heard, without a long process, the difficulty and laboriousness of which is apt to be forgotten. The instrumental music of those days was not written in 'notes' at all. It was in 'tablature', a method of notation which told the player not what note he was to play, but what finger he was to put down and where he was to put it. On the other hand, unaccompanied music for several voices (like almost all the music of Morales) was written in musical notes; but each voice-part was written out separately, either in a separate book, or in one large book but at opposite corners of the page. In the huge, illuminated choir-books of Spanish cathedrals, where much unpublished music of Morales is to be found, the part for the treble, for instance, is always at the top of the left-hand page, while the bass is at the bottom of the right-hand page. It is possible for several singers to sing such music from one book (though very difficult for modern singers); but it is impossible for a musical researcher to read it straight off, and see whether it is good. He has first to copy or photograph each page separately; then go back to his inn and try to fit the parts together into a score. A mistake of the original copyist will throw the whole thing out; and one may puzzle over it for days without finding the solution. Only when a score has been made is it possible to see whether the music is beautiful or interesting; it is work in which there is no means of seeing whether it is worth while until it is finished. Music by Morales is also found in printed 'part-books'—sets of from three to eight little volumes, in which each singer had his own part in a separate book. These also have to be fitted together before the music can be read; and it often happens that one book is missing from a set. Sometimes the missing part turns up unexpect-

tedly; the fifth part of an incomplete motet, in the British Museum, is in the Cathedral at Málaga; a part missing from a set at Seville is in the Bibliothèque Royale at Brussels; two part-books, in the Cathedral at Avila are completed by three others in a neighbouring convent.

Musical research, then, is a long and weary occupation. Yet it has its diversions. At Seville Cathedral the old music was piled anyhow in a lumber-room, while the proper *Archivo de Musica* was used for storing candles and the stage-properties of church festivals. With the countenance of the Choir-master, and the help of one of the little boys who, dressed as pages in the time of Velazquez, dance, sing and clack their castanets in front of the high altar, the music books were found, dusted, sorted and catalogued, and then work could begin. In the Columbine Library, however (founded by Ferdinand, the son of Christopher Columbus), there is a good, printed catalogue which includes the music. Ferdinand Columbus travelled extensively in Italy; and he bought all the new music of his time, which happened to be that of the invention of music printing from movable types. He possessed a book of Italian *Frottole* (Tom. XI), the existence of which has been entirely unknown to musical bibliography. In every book he wrote the place and date of purchase, with the rate of exchange on that day—so many *quattrini* to the Spanish gold ducat. Toledo has a magnificent collection of Morales MSS. in illuminated folio choir-books. Others are in the Catalan Library at Barcelona, most friendly of Spanish libraries; and in the Escorial, friendly and peaceful too, although a summer resort has sprung up, which might be called Escorial-sur-mer, or the Southend of Madrid. At Avila, a valuable little collection of early printed music, in thin, vellum-bound part-books, is to be found in a certain nunnery. Every morning and every afternoon as the researcher presented himself to the invisible *tornera*, answering the challenge: *Ave Maria Purísima*, by the

countersign: 'Immaculate Conception!' a thin, conventual voice would reply:

'Oh, that's Don Juan, isn't it? Please go upstairs.' And Don Juan proceeded to catalogue and to copy, under the eyes of three nuns, watching him from behind a double iron grating.

A biographical sketch of Morales was printed in *Music and Letters* for January, 1925. To that may now be added the date of his first appointment—choir-master at the Cathedral of Avila (1526). He always described himself as a native of Seville; and since, by 1526, he was old enough to occupy a responsible position, he cannot have been born much later than 1500. His musical surroundings were first Spanish and then Flemish; for in the second quarter of the sixteenth century Flemish composers held something of the position and prestige enjoyed by German composers at the end of the nineteenth. Quantities of music by early Flemish composers is preserved in the big choir-books at Seville and Toledo; while it was in collections of motets by the Flemish composer, Nicholas Gombert, that Morales' earliest music was printed in 1541. Morales was a singer in the Papal choir from 1535 to 1545; he was one of the founders of the great Flemish-Roman School of Church-music, and his own compositions were admired and imitated for many years after his death. After leaving Rome he was choir-master at Toledo (1545-7), at Marchena, near Seville, in a private ducal chapel (1550), and at Málaga Cathedral (1551-3). He disappeared (perhaps on the wild road between Málaga and Toledo) between the 4th September and the 7th October, 1553, and was never heard of again.

Morales was famous among his contemporaries. There were personal qualities in his style which soon made him recognisably different from the Flemish composers—such, for instance, as the disposition, the 'spacing' of his voices, and his use of massive declamation by all the

voices at once when the words gave particular point to the music. Then there was his acute realisation of the expressive possibilities of certain 'modes' which have been favourites in Spain from that day to this. A constant feature of Southern Spanish popular music of to-day—the pianoforte pieces of Albéniz and Granados are full of it—is the perpetual recurrence of four descending notes, with a drop of a semitone on to the bottom one. Morales is never more expressive than when he is doing this, and his use of this cadence may account for Pedrell and others among his countrymen finding him so intensely Spanish. Two or three characteristic cadences are probably enough to give the Spanish effect, just as a few 'Purcellian' cadences and 'false relations' give an utterly English feeling to the mass *Euge bone* of Morales' English contemporary, Christopher Tye.

The fact that Morales sometimes broke the rules, as the Tudor composers did almost always, did not blind his contemporaries to his complete mastery of the technique of composition. The 'rules of counterpoint' were originally only a statement of what intervals a singer could manage and what he could not; yet counterpoint, with Morales, became not a restraint but a means of expression. What strikes one particularly is his imaginative use of structural principles. He does not make wild shots and lucky hits like Taverner; but if he is less surprising than his English contemporaries, he always seems to know exactly what he is doing. Clearness in thought and expression was evidently a passion with him, and his one recorded saying confirms this attitude. Discussing the organ one day with Juan Bermudo, the author of a book on music and musical instruments, he remarked: 'If what some of these organists do could be brought out clearly, we should find grand mistakes.' The object of music, he held, was 'to give nobility and austerity to the Soul'; yet it is precisely the nobility and austerity of his

music which has tended to banish him from the Roman Church Service, in favour of Victoria. The formal pre-occupation and austerity of Morales (two characteristically Spanish qualities) are also found in the later composer in an intenser form; but the modern reputation of Victoria, unlike that of Morales, depends upon a few of his more expressive responses and motets, which have been sentimentalized by transposing them into flat keys, and accompanying them on the organ. Morales, on the other hand, is remarkable for his lyrical sense, his feeling for the expressive possibilities of a good tune. His favourite principle of construction—used in his earliest known composition, written for a peace-conference, in 1538—was that of an independent voice singing words and a melody different from those the other voices were singing. It was not new, but Morales did it better than anyone else. He even did it in the Mass. An English composition by Dunstable (which is, or was, in a library at Trent) has one voice which, strange to say, sings ‘Cuckoo’ throughout the entire musical setting of the Holy Office. Morales never achieves the homely humour of that; but he has a Mass in which one voice bawls a Spanish folk-song, while the others go on with the liturgical words, and like every composer of his day, he wrote masses to the popular French tune of *L’homme armé*, and made them serious and noble pieces of music.

The music of Morales might be better known. The *English Singers*, with their usual alertness, have introduced a beautiful motet of his into their recitals at St. Martin’s-in-the-Fields; but in most choirs, Morales is forgotten. Yet, after the cheap emotionalism, which is too often pumped into Victoria, the nobility and sweetness of Morales would come as a pleasant change. Victoria often wrote strong and beautiful things, but those are seldom sung; and as he lived at a period in which the ‘Palestrina-style’ was rapidly becoming a dead language, his thoughts

and experiments were constantly tending towards new means of expression. Morales died when Victoria was a boy. There had been no Palestrina, no Orlando Lasso, and no Marenzio; the art of writing music for unaccompanied voices was still capable of development. It was Morales who showed musicians in Rome, the centre of the musical world, how that development might be accomplished. He had found church music in the state of garrulous complexity to which it had been brought by Josquin des Prés; he left it simpler, more expressive, and more direct than before, the model of the next generation, which brought the style to its highest point and then saw it turn into something else.

Morales has an interest for English music, too. At the time of his death he was the greatest composer in Europe, and the contemporary of the earlier Tudor composers, Taverner, Tye, and Tallis. Like them, his musical personality was Flemish, *plus* something else; and it is not without interest to observe the different directions taken by men of originally Flemish training. Neither old English music, nor old Spanish music, can be studied in a water-tight compartment, all by itself. The Flemish musicians, and then the Italians, both had their share in moulding it.

J. B. TREND

# THE BALLET

*Margaret Morris Dancing.* By Margaret Morris and Fred Daniels. (Kegan Paul, Trubner, Trench & Co.) 10s. 6d. net.

IN her very last chapter Miss Morris tells us that she is often asked why she has not danced more herself. 'It is because I believe that I have been doing much more important work in founding my school,' she answers. It is the appropriate answer from a person who is an enthusiastic schoolmistress rather than an artist. But Miss Morris apparently believes herself to be an artist too. She enumerates the various activities with which her mind has been occupied, 'founding, organising, managing, both from the artistic and business sides, my school, my Club, my Summer Schools and performances, besides writing considered statements about my work, and lecturing,' and she explains that it was not possible to attend to them all and 'to do creative artistic work at the same time'. That the 'creative' impulse can be temporarily stultified by such activities is no doubt true. But that a genuine artist could voluntarily give up her youth to organising classes and clubs is more than doubtful. And when Miss Morris says 'I hope in the future to have more time to give to my own dancing, and also to painting and musical composition,' it is, frankly, difficult to feel that her return to 'creative' work is likely to make any great difference to the history of dancing or painting or music.

As a matter of fact, even Miss Morris's teaching does not appear to have an artistic aim. '*How*', she asks—she italicises with the comical frequency of a Queen Victoria—'can physical exercises be made interesting?' And answers, 'by bringing in the artistic or creative

element.' This, decidedly, is keeping art in its place. Again she says, 'it is far more important that I should establish my school so that it will carry on, and develop, through others into something better than it is possible to create in one lifetime.' Clearly her activities are eugenic and utopian (in the Fabian sense of the word) rather than artistic. M. Diaghileff is not connected with the theatre so very much longer than Miss Morris, not more at the most than half a lifetime, yet he has made history in the art of the theatre not once but over and over again. A dozen years or so ago Miss Morris, with some other healthy young English women, might be seen any evening performing on the stage of the Kingsway Theatre, which at that time was under very improving rather Fabian management. About the same time Nijinsky and Karsavina were to be seen at Covent Garden in amongst other ballets, *Le spectre de la rose*—a ballet of no great pretensions, but the difference between it and the performance of Miss Morris's company was the difference between art and something very little removed from 'physical jerks'. The Kingsway stage is very small of course. But an artist would have noted the fact and arranged her dances to suit it. Miss Morris did not do this successfully.

Much has happened in the history of the Diaghileff ballet since then, but Miss Morris does not seem to have changed. She denounces the conventions of the Italian ballet on the ground that they have 'no particular meaning'. Most of the positions in which she and her pupils have been photographed for the forty full-page illustrations to this book seem, however, to be without meaning particular or general. Artistic conventions exist as points of departure for the genuine artist. In 'The House Party', for instance, Mdlle. Nemtchinova's extraordinary progresses across the stage were conventionalised to the last muscle, yet they had an outlandish beauty that



all the 'natural' effects in the world could not produce. At first they seemed so startling that one was suspicious of them. It is possible to any of us to be taken in temporarily by 'stunt'. Here, it was as if some unnatural form, Brancusi's *White Bird* say, began to come to life. But the more often one saw 'The House Party' (in some ways a trivial ballet), the more one realised that between them, Nemtchinova and the choreographer (Madame Nijinska) had again justified every argument that has ever been advanced in favour of the Italian ballet in general, and the Diaghileff variations on it in particular. Incidentally, as much could not be said for *Les Matelots*. But in the other new ballet of last season, *Zephyr and Flora*, though the absence of M. Anton Dolin was regrettably obvious and there was here and there a suggestion of flippancy, of lack of artistic seriousness, there were passages that made it almost the finest ballet that has been produced since *The Three-Cornered Hat*. M. Massine showed that he was recapturing the discretion he seemed at the Pavilion and in *Les Matelots* to be throwing to the winds, and his choreography had significance practically the whole time. *Barabau* was an unpretentious little ballet but within its limits admirable in every way.

The dancers in *Les Matelots* (which was enormously popular) did superlatively what Miss Margaret Morris's pupils do—comparatively, should one say? They struck every conceivable kind of attitude, related and unrelated to each other and to the matter in hand. But they did it with technical mastery and at bewildering speed. Judging only by Mr. Daniels' photographs, which however, are, as photographs, excellent, Miss Morris's pupils do it self-consciously and heavily. No doubt it is good for their health. Doubtless also, Miss Morris's curriculum provides no worse material for pupils with a natural aptitude for the stage to begin upon than most other academical curricula—it is said that at least two

young actresses of great talent studied with her. But that her method has any special artistic value has not been proved, and though it would be pleasant to think that her school of English ballet might lead to important developments in theatrical art in England, one is bound to confess that for the present it remains a matter for satisfaction, that the choreography of Mr. Constant Lambert's ballet, which is to be produced by the Diaghileff company during the summer, has been arranged by Madame Nijinska. Miss Morris is undoubtedly something more than a feminine Sandow. She has still to convince us that she is even the makings of a choreographer of taste.

L. ST. SENAN

# ITALIAN CHRONICLE

NOW that the Italian Futurist movement has crystallized into formulas which seem to hold no further possibility of original developments, and now that the traditionalist reaction has issued its pronouncements and so concluded its task, one might say that literary Italy, for the moment at least, lives only in the work of individuals and in certain periodicals round which rally the best of the younger elements. At present literary schools do not exist and, while in other countries people still talk of surrealism, dadaism, expressionism, etc., with us there is only a tendency to construct according to personal impulses and within the limits of an accepted discipline. This state of mind was originated and has been fostered by the groups, each acting on its own account, which were, and are, the leading influences in the reviews, *La Ronda*, edited by Vincenzo Cardarelli; *Il Convegno*, edited by Enzo Ferrieri; and *L'Esame*, edited by Enrico Somaré. And, in a less strict and more ample domain, such as that of the weekly, *La Fiera Letteraria*, we see that the majority of the contributors, although chosen with no regard to group-prejudices, remain upon the track which carries on tradition, without either sudden breaks or flat pedantries. What else? If we turn to the dailies and take a look at that peculiarly Italian institution, 'the third page' (the page upon which the writer is called to exercise a half-journalistic, half-literary activity with short tales, essays, artistic divagations, moral fables and amusing disquisitions), we see that among the most popular contributors, from Antonio Baldini to Carlo Linati, and from Alfredo Panzini to Riccardo Bacchelli, the 'call to order' is extremely evident.

The best work is, in substance, in opposition to the inundations of rhetoric and pure academicism—ancient

maladies of our young country—as much as to the latest form of romanticism which is identified with the movements that spring from the branch of futurism. We want a return to precise and concrete expression, to vigorous prose and poetic harmony, following, in this respect, the pure Italian tradition which has had, in modern times, its greatest exponents in Alessandro Manzoni and Giacomo Leopardi. We are trying to re-establish the eternal values of art, leaving the fancy and the imagination free to develop within what seem restrictions, but, in reality, only represent refuges from the merely fluent, the provisional and the nonsensical. In determining this artistic course the critical and philosophical work of Benedetto Croce has had a great influence: it is a work in the highest degree illuminating, even if open to discussion in detail and in application.

This being the state of things, I should say that the climate of literary Italy, having passed through the various stages of academic gloom, the hot blaze of rhetoric and the romantic and futuristic tempest, has now become as mild as that of a Lombard spring: storms may arise, such as one of which I shall speak below, but even they pass quickly, leaving the air a trifle fresher and a clearer sky. The weather is therefore propitious: and if there are roses—to use the words of popular wisdom—they will flower.

This brief preface was necessary, before beginning my chronicle of intellectual life in Italy, that the gentle English reader might be less surprised that my account is based rather upon the work of definite and representative figures than upon intellectual movements.

I will begin, then, with the storm mentioned above—that is, the poems which Giovanni Papini has recently published under the title of ‘*Pane e Vino*’ (Vallecchi, Florence): but even this was an old-fashioned storm, one of those classic hurricanes with all its thunder and lightning following the rules of the meteorological code, rhymed

verses, sonorous hendecasyllables, triplets and quatrains in closed order. Papini is well known to the international public through his 'Storia di Cristo', a dogmatic book in which violent language alternates with passionate faith. But now this writer wishes to appear before us as a 'masculine' poet, since his favourite authors are Jacopone da Todi, Dante, Michelangelo, Campanella, Alfieri and Carducci, all of them poets who but rarely knew or expressed mellifluous sweetnesses long drawn out. In the 'Soliloquy on Poetry' that prefaces his poems he speaks of wishing to be poet of the chisel not of the graving tool, the sculptor not the gem-cutter. In the same 'Soliloquy' there is a burning defence of poetry which a little recalls that of Shelley: 'If men knew and remembered,' he says among other things, 'if they really loved one another—their restriction to the love of self alone having lost them the art of loving—they would have to consider poetry one of the most necessary things.'

As for the poems themselves, they are distinguished from all others, not only by the rough hardness of the rhythm, but also by the violence of the words, many of which will offend the ears of sober and fastidious readers. But we must not forget that Papini from his earliest youth has been an exceptional 'slasher' (*stroncatore*): he has always had a taste for verbal truculence from the days when he used to demolish masterpieces and systems of philosophy with chaotic brilliance to those when, in the columns of the *Lacerba*, he roused the Italians to war against Germany. To-day, however fervent a Catholic he has become, he does not seem to have much faith in the precepts of Christian indulgence.

To give an idea of Papini's poetry I will quote on two characteristic examples. Here is a quatrain, 'rocky' and rough in all conscience:

'La buona montagna di mezzo gennaio,  
tutta gioiata di luce ghiacciante

La brillantato il sereno pietraio  
e la sua frigida trina di piante '

And here is a slashing attack on Arcadian poetry:

' A sinistra un cipresso, a destra un rosignolo,  
ogni provveditore di bellezze stecchite  
modula a voce fessa la cabala e l'assolo  
per la ristorazione delle muse marcite.

Con tempeste in catini e temporali usati,  
leviatani di stoppa ed eroi d'alabastro  
s'è apposto con sospiri d'oracoli sudati  
sul viso all'universo un romantico empiastro.

Basta col verbo fiacco e la parola impura!  
Ritorni ogni poeta un muto migrabondo:  
Intombata che avremo ogni letteratura  
Gusteremo in silenzio il sapore del mondo.'

An uncouth, even harsh, poetry, like the voice of a stump-  
orator, but one that is not wanting in suggestiveness and  
which has a ring of real emotion when this proud and re-  
flective poet forgets his polemical fervour, as in the poems  
dedicated to old and human joys, that is, to natural beauty  
and to his wife and daughters.

Among other recent books there is one that is a singular  
contrast to Papini's, not so much in its literary tendency,  
which is also traditionalist, but in its tone. This is *Cose  
Viste*, by Ugo Ojetti (Treves: Milan), the third volume  
of a successful series. It is a collection of essays, impres-  
sions and portraits originally published in the *Corriere  
della Sera*, the most important Italian daily, of which  
Ojetti himself is now editor. These articles, written in an  
elegant and polished style, present to the reader's taste a  
prose of classical flavour. Indeed, Ojetti's culture is based  
upon the classics. Devoted as he is to the Italian tradi-  
tion, he has been able to assimilate and, at the same time,  
express it in quite modern shapes. His portraits of people

whom he has met in different countries, such as Valéry, Suarès, Paul Adam, and Louys, besides a large number of Italians, bring out with extraordinary clearness the physical features of the person described by seizing the one chief characteristic that singles him out from the crowd. These brilliantly lucid articles represent another call to order, to gentlemanly good taste and to verbal moderation. I have mentioned these two works, because it seems to me that, apart from their artistic values, there are reflected in them the two most characteristic tendencies of the Italian mind: on the one hand, we find the faculty of exaltation in cold blood, the vigorous, plebeian gesture, the shrug of the shoulders, the quixotry of hunters after impossible ideals—as to some extent we all are in Italy; and on the other, the smiling scepticism, the desire to see clearly and to believe in a serene life remote from the disturbances of our day, and that love of Olympic calm which has been handed down to us by our ancestors. As a national entity, that is what Italy is. With an ardent aspiration for the absolute and the mythical, with quarrelsome clamour and a fantastic unbridling of all the senses and all the passions, we unite a power of returning to ourselves, a confidence in the wisdom of the ages, and a trust in the salutary influence of those things which in our world are indisputably fixed as good.

As I approach the end of my account, I should not like the gentle reader to get the impression that all the intellectual forces of Italy are to be found in the ranks of traditionalism, for that would be an injustice to the proverbial inconstancy of our people. Even with us, in fact, the interesting experiments of the so-called advance-guard continue, though almost always in the domain of the theatre. Thus we have to note the influence of Luigi Pirandello's art, which has induced more than one of our young writers to put upon the stage the disquieting problems of relativism and of the world of dreams. At

Rome we have a theatre expressly appropriated to these anti-traditional audacities, A. G. Bragaglia's theatre of the 'Independenti', which has been giving some very notable novelties during the present season.

Much interest has been aroused by the discovery of a writer who has hitherto been almost unknown, namely, Italo Svevo. This discovery is due, not only to the periodicals, *L'Esame* and *Il Quindicinale*, but also to Valéry Larbaud and to Benjamin Crémieux, who wrote about him at some length in the *Navire d'Argent*, and to the good services of James Joyce. It is the latest of Svevo's works, *La Coscienza di Zeno*, which has specially attracted attention and discussion, owing to its content being to a large extent founded upon Freudian psycho-analysis and, also, owing to certain lively descriptions drawn—so it is hinted—from real life. Some Italian men of letters, however, consider that the work of this Italo-German writer is wanting in true unity of inspiration, and that, above all, his diction is very imperfect: so that, although for the moment there was an excited feeling that a masterpiece comparable to the best work of Fogazzaro or Verga had been lying hidden among us, the sharp and peremptory criticisms aroused by it have deferred the final judgment to the opinion of posterity. The case of Svevo has ceased to disturb the general calm, just as the water in a pool resumes tranquillity after a stone has been thrown into it. Moreover, it is rather difficult to pronounce upon this phenomenon in a country like Italy, which for many decades has been unaccustomed to the sudden explosions of hitherto obscure genius: and let me add that this mistrust issues neither from an absurd trade-jealousy nor from caste-prejudices, but rather from the revival of seriousness and conscientiousness in criticism which make it almost impossible to admit that great art can be produced without constant preparation and daily sacrifice. Svevo, who has for many years been a business-man in London,



has certainly not had the opportunity for developing and refining his undeniable gifts of observation and narration: and, if his work reveals an instinctive talent and a really exceptional capacity of development, it is to be regretted that the contingencies of life have put too serious an obstacle to the final realisation of these primitive impulses. This is the opinion in Italy, and I repeat that, even if these presumptions are mistaken, it is only one more sign of the rigorous strictness with which we now wish to judge works of art. If, on a more leisurely and untrammelled reading, the works of Svevo take on a better appearance, that will be all to the good. For the present our reserves are excusable, in so far as the intellectual Italy of to-day is reconquering the consciousness of her traditional values—which are also founded upon our linguistic heritage—with the earnest purpose of uniting her voice to those which are raised in every part of the world in the laborious toil of the modern spirit. Neglected by Europe and indifferent ourselves up to a few years ago, we have at last come to wish that our art, whether it be great or small, should be regarded with sympathy by foreigners, just as we, with a renewed and intense curiosity, regard theirs. For that very reason, we wish to be the severest judges of ourselves.

G. B. ANGIOLETTI

# BOOKS OF THE QUARTER

*Science and the Modern World.* By Alfred North Whitehead,  
F.R.S. (Cambridge University Press.) 12s. 6d. net.

This is perhaps the most important book published in the conjoint realms of science and philosophy since Descartes' *Discourse on Method*: at least, it is the first attempt to issue out of a certain way of thought which has prevailed since Descartes' day. It embodies the material of a revolution in our whole concept of life or being, and seeks to reinterpret, not only the categories of science and philosophy, but even those of religion and art. Our only doubt is that by reason of the urgency of his task, Dr. Whitehead has been too hasty in its execution. It lacks the perfection of form and the absolute aptness of phrase that should be given to a work of such moment. But in this matter the author merely conforms to the economic necessities of his environment. The day has passed when years of solitude and seclusion could be given to the moulding of thoughts' expression: it must issue urgently into the turmoil, so far as the combatant scientist or philosopher is concerned. For this reason it becomes more than ever necessary that the poet should be attentive to the achievements of philosophy (which, in this latest exposition, also embodies science) and give to them a vivid and memorial form. Dr. Whitehead is very insistent on the evidence of poetry, because he believes that the ultimate appeal is to naïve experience; and he correlates the world of thought with the world of sense. But the poet is only capable of his intuitive experiences so long as he receives some sort of sanction from the procedure of thought. A positive poetry is possible when the æsthetic intuitions of the poet co-operate with the thought of the philosopher (as in the cases of Lucretius and Dante). When a great poet has to work in opposition to the formulations of current philosophy (as Wordsworth did) the result is a negative protest. This is perhaps the most useful distinction that can be made between classicism and romanticism, and it is a distinction; it should be noted, between modes of operation, and not of æsthetic values.

The greater part of Dr. Whitehead's book is occupied with a review of the progress of science and its relations to philosophy during the past three centuries, showing in particular how the divorce almost unconsciously established by Descartes between the subjective sphere of the mind and the objective sphere of matter has resulted in a complete divorce between philosophy and science, science thus becoming, by the end of the nineteenth century, an uncritical and uncriticised theory of material mechanism, and philosophy a baseless, structureless epistemology. But within the present epoch certain complexities have developed which completely shatter the old orthodox assumptions. These complexities are, briefly, the theory of relativity which destroys the presumption of a definite present instant at which all matter is simultaneously real, and the quantum theory, which even more drastically, destroys the assumption of continuity in space. It will be obvious to the least reflecting intelligence that such discoveries cannot be reconciled with the concept of the world as a uniform mechanism, subject to all-pervading 'laws of nature'. Dr. Whitehead has little difficulty, at any rate, in showing the incompatibility of these new theories with the old science, and the task he sets himself in this book is no less than to review the whole scene of dissolution and to suggest a new philosophy to which all the facts can be accommodated. His achievement is to be judged, not merely as the incorporation of new discoveries in science into some logical concept of the universe, but as going further than this and reuniting once more (for the first time, that is to say, since the philosophy of St. Thomas) the procedures of science and philosophy—or, as it might be expressed, identifying the nature of structure and of value.

The new philosophy is given the name of *organic mechanism*, and it asserts that 'the whole concept of materialism only applies to very abstract entities, the product of logical discernment. The concrete enduring entities are organisms, so that the plan of the *whole* influences the very characters of the various subordinate organisms which enter into it. In the case of an animal, the mental states enter into the plan of the total organism and thus modify the plans of the successive subordinate organisms until the ultimate smallest organisms, such as electrons, are reached. Thus an electron within a living body is different from an electron outside it, by reason of the plan of the body. The electron blindly runs either within or

without the body; but it runs within the body in accordance with its character within the body; that is to say, in accordance with the general plan of the body, and this plan includes the mental state. But this principle of modification is perfectly general throughout nature, and represents no property peculiar to living bodies.' The general character of the theory will be evident from this single statement of it, but in view of its novelty and importance it may be as well to repeat other formulations given by Dr. Whitehead: 'In this theory, the molecules may blindly run in accordance with the general laws, but the molecules differ in their intrinsic characters according to the general organic plans of the situations in which they find themselves.' '. . . an individual entity, whose own life history is a part within the life history of some larger, deeper, more complete pattern, is liable to have aspects of that larger pattern dominating its own being, and to experience modifications of that larger pattern reflected in itself as modifications of its own being.' Dr. Whitehead then proceeds to show, almost with jubilation, how this theory of organic mechanism links up with the doctrine of evolution. 'The aboriginal stuff, or material, from which a materialistic philosophy starts, is incapable of evolution. This material is in itself the ultimate substance. Evolution, on the materialistic theory, is reduced to the role of being another word for the description of the changes of the external relations between portions of matter. There is nothing to evolve, because one set of external relations is as good as any other set of external relations. There can merely be change, purposeless and unprogressive. But the whole point of the modern doctrine is the evolution of the complex organisms from antecedent states of less complex organisms. The doctrine thus cries aloud for a conception of organism as fundamental for nature. It also requires an understanding activity—a substantial activity—expressing itself in individual embodiments, and evolving in achievements of organism. The organism is a unit of emergent value, a real fusion of the characters of eternal objects, emerging for its own sake.'

It is obvious that such a theory must proceed on certain assumptions as to the nature of knowledge or experience. It is beyond the scope of this book to go into any detailed investigation of such questions, but Dr. Whitehead makes it quite clear that his standpoint is one of objectivity and of what he calls a provisional realism. He rejects the subjectivist position for three reasons. 'One reason

arises from the direct interrogation of our perceptive experience. It appears from this interrogation that we are *within* a world of colours, sounds, and other sense-objects, related in space and time to enduring objects such as stones, trees and human bodies. We seem to be ourselves elements of this world in the same sense as are the other things which we perceive. . . . My point is, that in our sense-experience we know away from and beyond our own personality; whereas the subjectivist holds that in such experience we merely know about our own personality.' The second reason for distrusting subjectivism is based on the particular content of experience. 'Our perceptions lead us to infer that there is something happening in the stars, something happening within the earth, and something happening on the far side of the moon. Also they tell us that in remote ages there were things happening. But all these things which it appears certainly happened, are either unknown in detail, or else are reconstructed by inferential evidence. In the face of this content of our personal experience, it is difficult to believe that the experience world is an attribute of our own personality. My third reason is based upon the instinct for action. Just as sense perception seems to give knowledge of what lies beyond individuality, so action seems to issue in an instinct for self-transcendence. The activity passes beyond self into the known transcendent world. It is here that final ends are of importance. For it is not activity urged from behind, which passes out into the veiled world of the intermediate subjectivist [i.e., he who believes that our perceptual experience does tell us of a common objective world, but that the things perceived are merely the outcome for us of this world, and are not *in themselves* elements in the common world itself.] It is activity directed to determinate ends in the known world; and yet it is activity transcending self and it is activity within the known world. It follows therefore that the world, as known, transcends the subject which is cognisant of it.'

Both realists and idealists can start from an objective standpoint, as Dr. Whitehead remarks. That his own standpoint is realistic the reader of this review must take more or less for granted, for it is impossible to condense any further within the limits of clarity the rather technical statement of the doctrine given by its author. But if the reader will recall the distant castle in *Alciphron*, which presented such difficulties in Berkeley's mind, then the new doctrine, *in which the idea of simple location has gone*, can be expressed in this manner:

'The things which are grasped into a realised unity, here and now, are not the castle, the cloud, and the planet simply in themselves; but they are the castle, the cloud and the planet from the standpoint, in space and time, of the prehensive unification. In other words, it is the perspective of the castle over there from the standpoint of the unification here. It is, therefore, aspects of the castle, the cloud, and the planet which are grasped into unity here.'

It is a doctrine of the interconnection of everything. 'In a certain sense everything is everywhere at all times.' It is a doctrine capable of many applications, and the consistency with which it solves such diverse problems as the nature of memory and the basis of induction is the most persuasive aspect of it. But perhaps its most important effect is to get rid of the idea of an inert valueless matter independent of mind. The assumption of modern science, first made explicit by Descartes, is that bodies and minds are independent substances, each existing in its own right apart from any necessary reference to each other. The consequences of this assumption, both for art and religion, have been nothing less than disastrous. 'The independence ascribed to bodily substances carried them away from the realm of values altogether. They degenerated into a mechanism entirely valueless, except as suggestive of an external ingenuity.' The broad results were twofold. 'The doctrine of minds, as independent substances, leads directly not merely to private worlds of experience, but also to private worlds of morals. The moral intuitions can be held to apply only to the strictly private world of psychological experience.' This development culminated in modern industrialism and a world war. In the second place, 'the assumption of the bare valuelessness of mere matter led to a lack of reverence in the treatment of natural or artistic beauty'. This development is illustrated by the history of art since the Renaissance. Both developments together have succeeded in destroying religion. From being the incorporation of the deepest researches of the human mind and the widest reach of human sensibility, it has degenerated into 'a decent formula wherewith to embellish a comfortable life'. In another context Dr. Whitehead says: 'Sensitiveness without impulse spells decadence, and impulse without sensitiveness spells brutality.' That aphorism will account for all the vagaries of modern art; its will not account for the deadness of modern religion, for that lacks both impulse and sensitiveness.

In a final chapter Dr. Whitehead carries his conclusions into the fields of education and sociology. It there becomes apparent how real and intimate are the abstractions of philosophy. They are modifications of the nature of existence itself, and not merely changes of environment. But mind does not evolve without experience, and this book confirms above all the principle of change, the spirit of adventure. 'The psychological field, as restricted to sense-objects and passing emotions, is the minor permanence, barely rescued from the nonentity of mere change; and the mind is the major permanence, permeating that complete field, whose endurance is the living soul. But the soul would wither without fertilisation from its transient experiences. The secret of the higher organisms lies in their two grades of permanences. By this means the freshness of the environment is absorbed into the permanence of the soul. The changing environment is no longer, by reason of its variety, an enemy to the endurance of the organism. The pattern of the higher organisms has retreated into the recesses of the individualised activity. It has become a uniform way of dealing with circumstances; and this way is only strengthened by having a proper variety of circumstances to deal with.'

Dr. Whitehead sees that the greatest source of such variety is to be found in art, and he even defines great art as 'the arrangement of the environment so as to provide for the soul vivid, but transient, values'. He does not pursue this definition very far, except to remark on the element of transition, and the apparent need for a continual renewal of forms and values. This hardly lifts art out of the slough of individualism. But if this definition of art is related to another observation of Dr. Whitehead's, a sense of the possibilities of art does emerge. Writing of the general development of nature, in its scientific aspect, he says: 'The other side of the evolutionary machinery, the neglected side, is expressed by the word *creativity*. The organisms can create their own environment. For this purpose, the single organism is almost helpless. The adequate forces require societies of co-operating organisms. But with such co-operation and in proportion to the effort put forward, the environment has a plasticity which alters the whole ethical aspect of evolution.' Art, too, for its adequate force, needs such co-operation, and the mind is never so modified as when it becomes part of a pattern created in the organism of a complete society

HERBERT READ

*Voltaire.* By Richard Aldington. (*The Republic of Letters.* George Routledge & Sons, Ltd. 5s. net.)

Eighteenth-century literature in France and England is equally dominated for the present generation by a single figure. The French find it difficult to understand the predominance of Johnson, seeing that few of his writings have been read by even educated Englishmen; the English are more apt to recognise the predominance of Voltaire, although few of them have read more than *Candide*. Nineteenth-century English writers have dealt with Voltaire, but the gulf between one century and the next is curiously unbridgeable, and the separation of years and countries resulted in an output whose critical value will have less interest for lovers of literature than for students of complicated states of what is now known as psychoanalysis. In any case the eighty-odd volumes of Voltaire's collected writings are no light task to criticise, and Mr. Aldington is to be congratulated not only for having produced the first serious English study of them in the present century, but also for having apparently read them all.

The eighteenth century is fashionable just now, and many of the younger critics delight in cloaking their ignorance of its methods and manners with the lavish and inapposite use of French phrases in general and in particular of the epithet *dix-huitième*. Mr. Aldington's study is as uncompromisingly *vingtième* in its treatment of its theme as in its literary style, whose explosive footnotes, verbless sentences and wealth of allusional reference invoke the constant vision of Voltaire's face confronted with this exposition of his life and work. It must be a comforting reflection for modern writers on Swift, Pope and Voltaire, that their subjects are no longer alive to retaliate.

On the other hand, Mr. Aldington has a great deal to say, and he is very well worth reading. His volume is divided into two sections, the first of which deals with Voltaire's life, the second with his work. In the former he performs with admirable gusto his task of translating into the contemporary vernacular the amazing record of that lengthy, precarious existence. Voltaire could remember, as a child, meeting the aged Ninon de l'Enclos, and thus 'touching hands', in Mr. Aldington's pretty phrase, 'with the apostolic tradition of unbelief'; he lived on till almost the eve of the



Revolution. He began his literary career as the *enfant terrible* of his time, and ended it as the Grand Old Man of the French theatre, a career curiously similar to that of Mr. Bernard Shaw, whose own dramatic works may one day find their home in the limbo of oblivion that now holds those of Voltaire. His private life falls into well-defined periods, and Mr. Aldington makes the most of them all. His imprisonments in the Bastille, his beating by the bullies of the Chevalier de Rohan, his sojourn in England, his affair with the bluestocking Madame du Châtelet and residence with her at Cirey, her infidelity and subsequent death in childbirth, his life with Frederick the Great at Potsdam, his escape from Prussia and detention at Frankfort, would in themselves furnish material for a whole novel of hectic incident; but if Voltaire had died at Frankfort at the respectable age of fifty-eight, his position in the world of letters would be very different from what it is in fact. The last twenty-five years of his life were spent in Switzerland (host of many great men, parent of none), and it was precisely during this period that he produced the larger number of the masterpieces for which he is known. The incidents of those years are few, in comparison with the picaresque roll of his earlier life, but the closing scene was a miracle of stage-management, the triumphal journey to Paris and the coronation at the Comédie Française.

In the second section of his book Mr. Aldington sets himself the gigantic task of appraising in little more than a hundred pages what he calls the 'archipelago' of Voltaire's collected writings. The number of issues raised by such a discussion is inevitably greater than can be dealt with in the space of a short review, but it may be said that, like most critics, Mr. Aldington is at his best when treating of those productions that he whole-heartedly admires. Anyone can appreciate *Candide* and *La Princesse de Babylone*, but it is not so easy to write with discerning approval about *La Pucelle* and *Le Siècle de Louis XIV.* Mr. Aldington's expressed aim is 'to say how Voltaire's writings appear to a twentieth-century reader', and it is comforting to find that twentieth-century readers can approach those great works in an intelligent and sympathetic spirit. But alas! the twentieth century has little time to spend on the *Henriade* and *Zaïre*, and Mr. Aldington's picture of a spectral Voltaire in the next world wringing his hands over the realisation of the decline of taste in Europe, is enough to draw tears from any

catholic worshipper at the shrine of the Muses. Mr. Aldington admits that poets as considerable as Byron and Matthew Arnold were moved by Voltaire's serious poems and dramas; but the admission surprises him, and he himself dismisses these once admired productions—not without the support of careful reasoning—as frigid exercises in technique. Yet he allows that the plays, elaborately staged and costumed, with the advantage of first-rate music and mumming, were probably very effective entertainments, which is after all what they set out to be, and the rider which he adds, that these decorative accessories appear an insult when applied to Shakespeare, raises the ever disquieting doubt as to whether Shakespeare is not really at his best in the study rather than in the theatre. In the last resort, plays are written to be acted and not to be read; and, though it would be coxcombry to claim that Voltaire was a better dramatist than Shakespeare, Mr. Aldington himself seems to admit the possibility that Voltaire may have written with an eye more concentrated on the stage. The facts that Voltaire found flaws in Shakespeare, and that he considered Racine a finer playwright than Sophocles, will distress others than Mr. Aldington, but even in London to-day Voltaire has at least one supporter in both heresies.

It is a pity that it was no part of Mr. Aldington's scheme to analyse in detail the ironic method, which is Voltaire's keenest literary weapon, and which constitutes his surest claim on the affectionate attention of posterity. Such an analysis would inevitably have encroached upon an undue share of space in a small volume, but there could be little more rewarding to a student of eighteenth-century literature than a serious consideration of the extent of Voltaire's individual contribution to the irony of nations. Mr. Aldington remarks with truth, though in other words, that a large proportion of Voltaire's incursions into this pretty field is plaguey dull, but it is a recurring phenomenon that even the greatest masters of satire are of less interest to their descendants when they deal with subjects of diurnal importance than when they treat of the foibles of humanity in the mass. In spite of Swift's own considered enthusiasm, there are a hundred readers of *Gulliver* to-day for one who is seriously titillated by the *Tale of a Tub*.

In short, Mr. Aldington's study of Voltaire is peculiarly stimulating and provocative, and nobody who is interested in the eighteenth century can afford to neglect it.

WILLIAM KING

*Un Prêtre Symboliste: Marcel Hébert.* Albert Houtin. Rieder et Cie. Paris. 10 frs.

*Une Vie de Prêtre: Mon Expérience.* Albert Houtin. Rieder et Cie. Paris. 12 frs.

In two recent volumes, *Un Prêtre Symboliste: Marcel Hébert*, and *Une Vie de Prêtre: Mon Expérience*, M. Albert Houtin has made a further contribution to the history of religion in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, presenting as it were directly to the eyes of his readers a world of ecclesiastics, not in isolation but in actual contact with each other, giving us their private thoughts in their own words from their own letters, and, which are even more instructive, their after-thoughts, their inconsistencies, their too subtle accommodations, the instability of their minds under the pressure of opposed and incompatible forces, the last refinements of a sophistry exhausting itself in the attempt to maintain an ambiguous and equivocal position. 'Quand je revoyais', he writes on one of the last pages of his autobiography, 'les interprétations auxquelles les modernistes s'étaient livrés pour remplacer les mythes usés et reinterpréter les formules. Je me demandais si Frazer n'a pas raison d'écrire: "L'histoire de la religion est un long effort pour reconcilier un ancien usage avec une raison nouvelle, pour trouver une théorie raisonnable expliquant une pratique absurde".' In this matter, however, the most ambiguous and equivocal utterances may be the best proofs of sincerity! There is, for instance, the case of Marcel Hébert: 'L'expression "mythe" que j'ai employée en parlant de Dieu, en tant que nous le personnifions, désigne la *construction imaginative* qui fait inévitablement l'intelligence quand elle cherche à formuler sa foi en la divinité. J'ai donc employé ce mot *mythe* dans le sens où les théologiens enseignent que l'on ne peut parler de Dieu qu' *en se servant d'analogies anthropomorphiques*, "non univocè, nec purè equivocè, *sed analogicè*" comme l'explique admirablement Saint Thomas. . . .'<sup>1</sup> Or there is the case of Father Tyrrell, who writes to Baron F. von Hügel that it was not on this or that article of the creed that he and his friends differed from the theologians, 'we accept all; we differ on the word *credo*, on the sense of the word "true" as applied to dogma: it is the whole value of revelation which is at stake.'<sup>2</sup> Certainly

<sup>1</sup> *Un Pretre Symboliste*, p. 148.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 147.

one can understand the words of Cardinal Richard to Hébert, 'Ce que nous perd, c'est le subjectivisme; on ne donne plus aux hommes la vérité, mais des impressions personnelles. . . .'<sup>3</sup>

One does not of course suppose for a moment that M. Houtin has questioned the sincerity of the modernists, he sees too clearly into the psychological problem underlying their position; but if the 'vérité' of Cardinal Richard may have moved him to an ironical smile, he would probably have agreed as to the danger of 'subjectivisme'. M. Houtin, himself, is dangerously objectivist. Where Marcel Hébert and Father Tyrell were concerned with the philosophical question of value, or the psychological question of faith, M. Houtin is concerned purely with the historical question of fact. 'Je me sentais capable de démonter pièce par pièce la dogmatique chrétienne et d'expliquer sans aucun miracle son élaboration. Pour tirer mes idées au clair, je réfutai, la plume à la main, les deux traités fondamentaux que la théologie chrétienne met à sa base: celui de la "Révélation" et celui de "L'Eglise". Je me prouvais que les documents fondamentaux du christianisme, les Evangiles et les Actes des Apôtres ne sont pas comme on me l'avait enseigné au séminaire, authentiques, intègres et véracés. Je me prouvais que ni Dieu, ni Jésus n'ont institué d'Eglise au sens strict ou le prétend l'Eglise romaine.' But the scientific probity of M. Houtin's intelligence, the serenity of his historical conscience could not mitigate sufficiently the trouble which this crisis in his faith occasioned him, '... cette tranquillité ne régnait complètement que dans mon intelligence. Ma sensibilité était encore déséquilibrée. J'avais beaucoup souffert; j'étais meurtri, brisé. Comme je n'ai jamais insisté sur le côté sentimental de ma crise ni mis en livre ma grande douleur, on m'a souvent représenté comme un pur "intellectuel" heureux de se libérer d'une mythologie. La vérité est autre. Mon affranchissement fut très pénible.' In his case the emotional crisis was insufficient to obscure the question of fact; it was sufficient, however, to reveal to him the psychological problem of modernism: the re-action in the individual mind to the historical criticism of the fundamental documents. With the results of scientific criticism before it, the believing mind is bound to attempt some means of escape from the incredible conclusions, which it has been forced to consider; and in the case of each individual modernist, his 'modernism'

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* 145.

is no more than the testing of these means of escape whatever sophistries they may involve; it is a transitional stage which he is bound to traverse: an experience parallel to that of Newman as an Anglican, which was known as 'proving the cannon', in which there is a more or less deliberate attempt to inject one's own 'real' values, into the merely 'national' forms of dogma. Such a transitional stage is inevitable, whatever may be the issue of the conflict. In the case of Mgr. Duchesne, for example, M. Houtin publishes a very interesting series of his letters to Marcel Hébert. Mgr. Duchesne's attitude with regard to the teaching of his Church may be gathered from the following passage in one of their letters: 'Je n'irai pas jusqu'à dire: *intus ut libet, foris ut moris est*; mais retenant la seconde partie de l'adage, je libellerais le premier: *intus ut potes*.'<sup>1</sup> The *libertinism* of the seventeenth century, with its *intus ut libet*, is perhaps less cynical than the correction of Mgr. Duchesne. When one of his books, which had received an *imprimatur* in France, was condemned on its appearance in an Italian translation, Mgr. Duchesne submitted: *foris ut moris est*. But *intus ut potes* immediately raises the question, as to how far any external sanction or command is effective in an attempt to alter that imaginative construction of belief in the individual mind which results from a long and intricate psychological process; faith, in the fullest sense of the word, being not merely an object present to the consciousness, but a structural development of the consciousness itself. Newman has perhaps answered the question in a famous passage of *The Grammar of Assent*, in which he speaks of the impossibility of unclothing oneself of all the prepossessions and habits of mind and character, which constitute the greater part of personality, at the command of another. With his profound condition, his acute critical insight, his subtle distinctions and ability in argument, his wit, and malice, Mgr. Duchesne was perhaps the most demoralizing force acting within the Church; and one may hope that his submission was without the bitterness of martyrdom, or that he even enjoyed it as a novel form of recreation.

The mention of Newman brings up the question of his own relation to modernism. In attacking rationalism Newman was able to effect, at least to some extent, a reconciliation of faith and reason in the individual consciousness; but his whole method implied the freedom of that consciousness, and accepted it as the ultimate

<sup>1</sup> *Un Pretre Symboliste*, p. 115.

criterion of truth. Indeed he subsequently made an explicit declaration, in reply to a question concerning Infallibility, that 'Conscience is the aboriginal Vicar of Christ'. That the Church should have tolerated the teaching of Newman was, naturally enough, an encouragement to such modernists as attempted a compromise in 'un symbolisme qui permît une certaine reconstruction des vieilles croyances'. Marcel Hébert attempted to convert Brunetière to a more liberal Catholicism by lending him the *Essay on Development*; and if he failed in this object Newman's thought at least prepared him to appreciate and perhaps also to modify the pragmatism of William James. But the whole action of Newman's life, whatever may be the result of the arguments by which he supported it, was against Liberalism. By following the logical consequences of Newman's thought, we may arrive at a position entirely opposed to his own; but we do not carry him with us. M. Houtin agrees with M. Brémond, who was perhaps remembering the saying of Huxley, that the *Essays on Miracles* were 'un manuel de scepticisme'; but none of the three would have described Newman as a sceptic. From the marked divergence which exists between the action and the teaching of Newman, one may be led to conclude that however perfect the instruments which he used, the material in which he worked was defective. It is idle to set up the individual consciousness as the sole criterion of truth, and then impose on it an external authority which sets a limit to its action. Faith is not a matter of discipline.

FREDERIC MANNING

*The Best Poems of 1925.* Thomas Moult. (Jonathan Cape.) 6s. net.

*The Best Poems of 1925.* Leonard Strong. (Small, Maynard & Co.)

*Poems in one Volume.* J. C. Squire. (Heinemann.) 8s. 6d. net.

I should have preferred it if both Mr. Moult and Mr. Strong had followed Mr. Squire's lead and published the poems of 1925, as Mr. Squire republishes his own, without any qualifying epithet. There are two disadvantages in calling them 'The Best'. First,

neither Mr. Moulton nor Mr. Strong can be certain that they have got all or even most of the 'premier cru', and secondly it gives an admirable opportunity to that numerous class of critics, whose function is to 'greet the unknown with a sneer'. It is because I so cordially welcome these annual collections that I venture to suggest to the editors that their next volume should be entitled simply 'Poems of 1926'.

This said, I turn with a real sense of gratitude to these two books, which do perform a real service both in preserving beauty, else fugitive, and in presenting year by year a general review of the state of verse. The conclusion that in my view principally emerges from the 1925 collection is that the younger poets, both of England and America, are afraid of speaking all out. There is, I believe, a wider appreciation of beauty in danger than ever before in the history of the English tongue, but both St. George and (is it?) Saint Jonathan prefer to watch her agony rather than to go in and smash the dragon. The poets are afraid of tradition, and afraid of the reproach of facility. They rush down every bypath rather than walk in the main road, and they do not seriously consider whether the captivating lanes of their election do not lead back rather than forward.

This tendency is even more marked in the Americans than the English. I take for examples 'Of Mountains', by Leonora Speyer in the English collection, and 'The Joy Ride', by Warren Gilbert, in the American. Both these writers have felt something with real passion, both have had an individual guess at permanent values, and both have, as it were, taken down the message in shorthand, and then merely transcribed it. Indeed it seems to me that they have reversed, as too many of the *vers libristes* reverse, the old definition of verse, presenting us with emotion forgotten in tranquillity. They write down their memories, but they refuse the wracking, but indispensable, labour of restating them. They regard the rules of rhythm, melody and rhyme as incumbrances and snares. That is true of the rules unmastered, but it is utterly untrue when they are dominated by and fused into the poet's own vision. It is by conquering the rules, and not by ignoring them, that freedom comes, and the great revolt is never against form but against bad form.

Let me contrast with these Miss Sitwell's 'The Pleasure Gardens', and dwell on the memorable lines:

‘ There through the iron gates  
Of the fantastic gardens grow great flowers,  
And those small heart-shaped flowers that have the eyes  
Of little sisters in our long-dead childhood.’

Miss Sitwell enters through the iron-gates into the fantastic gardens by right, because she has delicately, but with immense pains, made the rules provide a key. She does not climb the wall, as she used to, nor slip in when the gardener isn't looking. She passes in by virtue of the spell. Or again, there is Mr. Sassoon's 'Poetry' that appears in both collections. Mr. Sassoon is saying nothing than an English poet of any period might not have said, and he is saying it in the old way. And yet how certainly he recaptures the thrush-note:

‘ I have been early waking,  
And while the dawn was breaking  
Have stolen afield to find  
The secrecy which quivers  
Beyond the skies and rivers  
And cities of the mind.’

How many thousand times do you suppose 'rivers' have been rhymed with 'quivers' and 'waking' with 'breaking'. Who, setting pencil to paper, has not rejected them as commonplace beyond repair? But Mr. Sassoon picks up the old fiddle, uses the same old bow, and finds, as all true art finds, that there is one more surprise left, and before we know where we are, we are on our feet clapping and stamping.

But, if I am asked what is there to hope from all these poems, I should first refuse to answer altogether, because there is a thick haze of morning mist. But if I must answer, then I will say that it seems to me to be well with poetry. For I think that it could be truly said that, while in neither of these volumes is there any new name that startles the stars, each is in a sense one poem—an eager, restless poem that, speaking in a thousand moods and souls, achieves a unity. There is in these books the outcry of a generation seeking for beauty, and if the cry sometimes is shrill, sometimes is spent in a hoarse shout, still it is genuine and fierce. And presently the volume of sound will be diverted into the inspiration of two or three flautists, who with this background of passion, will surely find the



authentic harmonics that tremble here just beyond the player's reach.

Mr. Squire, as I said above, is in a different case. He has been content to describe his poems not as the best poems of Mr. Squire (as he might justly have done) but merely as 'Poems in one Volume'. That is disarming, and indeed there is in respect of Mr. Squire some need to be disarmed. A legend has grown up round him. For some he has become a morose keeper of a petrified Royal Academy of Poetry. For others, his shadow lies across the whole field of contemporary verse, darkening what is bright in it, and underlining in black what is dull. For others still he is the captain of the forces of light. And in all this argument and controversy the original Mr. Squire has been obliterated, the Squire, who made no particular claim except to be allowed to address 'The Moon' and 'The Birds' in language tranquilly apposite to those endearing objects. Indeed, Mr. Squire who, I am sure, asked nothing better than to take his place modestly at the gate of Olympus, has by some malign destiny been converted into, or at any rate regarded as, the janitor of contemporary immortality. It is possible that he is himself to blame for having had thrust upon him the harsh functions of Cerberus, or he may not be to blame. But for my part I do not very much care because I am far more interested in the Author of 'The Birds' than in the adjudicator of the Hawthornden, far more disturbed by the composition of 'The Rugger Match' than by the decomposition of contemporary reputations and claims. Mr. Squire, it seems to me, in the period of Rupert Brooke, Flecker, and the earlier de la Mare and Davies, was quite definitely entitled to a place by such poems as 'Harlequin' and 'The Moon'. And not only that. As a satirist he promised to take very high rank indeed, though he has not yet cared to claim the chair between Belloc and Chesterton left vacant for him. It was not his fault, if, as the ultimate darkness quenched star after star, his became the dominant luminary in the impoverished sky. Nor did he in fact step into the dead men's flying shoes. He stuck manfully to his own, until he let himself be swept into the marshes of Free Verse. And as long as he claimed only the winged feet of Mercury, and did not aspire to other pinions, he was in my view justified of verse, and verse of him. He was in the tradition, and was not afraid of it, and his courage had its reward. If, later, he blundered into the stockyards of Chicago,

he was not the first whom Circe confused in that order of creation. But, when the heat of controversy dies down, it is my belief that it will be found that, while the publicist is forgotten, Squire the poet will be found when the birds stand:

‘Above the nests and long blue eggs we know’

or where under the moon

‘Into that silver out of shadows beat  
Dead black, the whole mysterious fishing-fleet.’

HUMBERT WOLFE

*Authors Dead and Living.* By F. L. Lucas. (Chatto & Windus.)  
7s. 6d. net.

*Dramatis Personæ.* By Arthur Symons. (Faber & Gwyer.) 8s. 6d.  
net.

It is not only that Mr. Lucas is young while Mr. Symons is elderly, or that the literary past of the one is a blank while that of the other is more vivid than his present: their differences as critics are far deeper than these. Yet if a rough but obvious discriminator were to step in with a ‘Yes: Lucas is a Cambridge don of the nineteen-twenties and Symons a Parisianised poet of the eighteen-nineties,’ I should accept his truth without praising his relevance. Both appear before us as critics: and though Mr. Symons could as little have written Mr. Lucas’s charming and graceful discourses on the Latin Anthology and medieval simplicity—they breathe the best aroma of an ancient University—as Mr. Lucas could have recorded the sayings of Mallarmé and Edmond de Goncourt, these accidents are not decisive. The divergence of their critical outlook is the thing of interest, far more so than their personal divergences or the question of their comparative values. Each has much value, but it is difficult to imagine the value of one transferred to the age of the other.

Mr. Lucas is of the present, yet his view sweeps far back into the past. His eye travels judiciously from the ground under his feet to the remote horizon. He sees it all quite neatly mapped out before him, from the irrecoverable simplicity of the early bard to the unavoidable disillusionment and ‘literariness’ of to-day; and words to describe these mappings arrange themselves neatly and

pointedly in his mind. His whole note, in fact, as Henry James would have said, is the 'judicious'; and it is something of a triumph to be consistently judicious, without ever being dull or priggish, about Ovid, Drayton, Donne, Vaughan, Cotton, Marvell, eighteenth-century lyrics, Walt Whitman, O'Shaughnessy, Herbert Trench, Flecker, Masfield, A. E. Housman, Walter de la Mare, Gordon Bottomley, W. H. Davies, Humbert Wolfe, Robert Graves, and many other writers of modern verse, with a grand finale of judiciousness, extremely well expressed, on 'The Progress of Poetry', in which Mr. Lucas puts his finger, with distinguished ease, on the strength of the past and the weakness of the present. This is not in the least ironically written, since I endorse, and would quote for emphasis, every word of that final essay. Indeed, I will quote a little:

'We have jettisoned the old iron that was the Victorian ballast; we have torn up the old charts by which they sailed so hopefully towards the port of El Dorado; and in consequence we roll sickly, without steerage-way, in the trough of an empty sea. . . . Often amused, often fascinated, I grow weary of this day of small things, of these acute and highly polished writers lost in their myriad details like sharp little needles in haystacks, of these incoherent characters who derive emotions of equal interest and intensity from the look of a woman and a tea-leaf, or feel that they have found reality and all's right with the world, because they caught the eye of a narcissus that morning, walking through the park. . . . This class of fiction . . . has worked up the weakness of Hamlet and forgotten the fineness; it has travestied the nobility of the *Odyssey* into that dreary *reductio ad absurdum* of itself, *Ulysses*.'

But Mr. Lucas' exposition of his view that 'the state of modern poetry is certainly not satisfactory', is but a part of his striking judiciousness. It is exemplified in pithy remarks on all subjects:

'Part of the price of Milton and Gibbon is the Ballads and Bartholomew.'

'We read Virgil far more for the character of Virgil himself than of the son of Anchises.'

'Belief in reason is not a curse, nor all frenzies fine, nor all intuitions true.'

'Dante went living down to Hell; Leopardi was born there.'

'To the ancients Memory was the mother of the Muses; but

she turns to a stepmother in ages like ours . . . but for the measures a desperate posterity will be driven into taking, the dead past would murder alike present and future, and England be divided from sea to sea between those twin paradises of the worm, cemeteries and libraries. Already our minds are getting like that. We are so devastatingly cultured.'

It is exemplified in his philosophic patience and his rather diluted hope of a better future. Willingly, were there space, would I contend with what appear to me two lapses from judiciousness—Mr. Lucas' attitude to Leopardi and to the poems of A. E. Housman. In both instances, the one critical, the other laudatory, he spoils his case by overstatement. As regards Leopardi, though he makes amends, *en passant*, on page 287, he seems to undervalue the sheer marmoreal beauty of a poem like 'La sera del dì di festa' as a positive statement; and as regards 'The Shropshire Lad' the comparison with Heine—surely not in the least 'unexpected'—had it been really pushed, might have tempered Mr. Lucas' absoluteness of enthusiasm. For such debate, however, this is not the occasion, for we must pass to Mr. Symons, leaving Mr. Lucas perched upon a dune in the modern desert, resigned but happy in the possession of first-class intellectual binoculars and a chaste style.

Mr. Symons can be judicious, too: but that is not his note. He can write, on the subject of the 'Angel in the House': 'Now poetry has nothing whatever to do with woman as the lady,' and on the subject of Francis Thompson: 'Verse, unless it is in some measure ecstasy, cannot be poetry. But it does not follow that in verse the most fervid ecstasy is the best poetry:' but these discriminations are not the essence of Mr. Symons as critic. We have him here in a somewhat haphazard form—an extremely badly edited volume printed in America, stuffed with irritating misprints and containing verbal repetitions (*e.g.* the passages on Maeterlinck on pp. 30—31 and 114—5); some of the articles are obviously cobbled together out of ephemeral jottings, and we know that part of the book is included in the author's collected works; yet there is enough, in bulk, coherence and merit, to give us our idea of Mr. Symons. He belongs to the past, to a recent past, but he writes of it as of the present. It is, in fact, his present. Unlike Mr. Lucas, he sits upon no scrubby dune sweeping a vast horizon with glasses, but gives the impression of one striving in a busy and brilliant literary market-

place where two naked eyes have all they can do to take in the attractive multiplicity. No complaints of disillusionment and literariness come from his lips. He feels no emptiness: indeed, how could he, when the present of which he writes is so full? His reference is continually to contemporaries, Maeterlinck, Mallarmé, Huysmanns, Meredith, Oscar Wilde, Swinburne, Rossetti, Verhaeren, George Moore, Pater, Sir William Burton, Réjane. His latest star is Conrad, his most modern instance the Russian ballet. He is anything but judicious: he is reminiscent and enthusiastic. He will say: 'That Balzac is the greatest, the most profound, thinker in French literature after Blaise Pascal, is certain,' and of Meredith: 'Not since the Elizabethans have we had so flame-like a life possessing the wanton body of style.' He knits his brows, not to compose the neat apophthegm, but to find the picturesque epithet. Thus, in his spirited laudation of Conrad's novels—which takes us no further than *Nostromo* and *The Secret Agent*—we find the admirable phrases 'living a hidden exasperated life', 'implacable comprehension' and 'sullen, subjective vision'. In its way the picturesque philosophical is as valuable as the judicious-cartographical, and it is certainly exhilarating. We follow that eloquent essay on Conrad, with approving emotions, even if we cannot admit that 'Lord Jim' is, in the same sense as 'Don Quixote', a criticism of life. We feel warmed, as it might be with a glass of wine at some boulevard café, Mr. Symons holding forth beside us. Delightful sittings, but unsafe. He says: 'Criticism, when it is not mere talk about literature, concerns itself with the first principles of human nature and with fundamental ideas.'

Thus Coleridge on Shakespeare, Shelley on Coleridge. 'Criticism, at such a height, is no longer mere reasoning; it has the absolute sanction of intuition.' Brave words, brave words—*garçon, encore une fine*. Yet it is not with intuition that Mr. Symons regretfully inserts a pin into Sir William Watson's poetic balloon, but by acute perception and one deadly comparison. The balloon collapses without disturbing any first principles or fundamental ideas. However, modern critical exponents of first principles and intuitions might learn something from Mr. Symons: he at least is not dreary. One could propose a toast after one of his essays, kiss red lips or dance a breakdown: after theirs—a glass of senna and a pious hymn.

ORLO WILLIAMS

*Humoresque.* By Humbert Wolfe. (Benn.) 6s. net.

There was a pessimist who wrote: 'La chair est triste hélas, et j'ai lu tous les livres,' and he was stating a physical fact that is true of most of us who have read too much; for there are only half a dozen, or a score, of things to say, and they have been said over and over again. *Maledicti qui ante nos nostra . . .*

'And cursed be those who came before  
And all our brilliant sayings said.'

The echo reverberates in our mind and spoils our pleasure, for it is an echo in a spiritually empty mind. '*Senza una fede forte*, Giovanni Papini has said recently, '*poesia non si fa*'; and, I add, *non s'intende*. There must be faith in something, if it is only in poetry, both in the writer and the reader. Even without a faith, the thrill and the excitement of poetry may still be had, though what is said is trite, if the syllables are strange enough. I was spelling out painfully the other day a few poems in a Russian anthology, and at the sounds (as nearly as I can render them):

'Vyessnáh eedyót, vyessnáh eedyót;'

and:

'Fsyaw éhta oozh býlla kagdáh-ta  
Naw toílka nyeh páwmnyou kagdáh.'

My blood went faster; and yet the first of these quotations only means: *Spring is co-o-ming*, as we say it and sing it in English, and the second:

'All this has happened once before,  
But when and where I cannot tell.'

Can you imagine any modern English poet having courage enough to say these simple ever-recurrent things in English, or any cultivated English man or woman reading them without a feeling of sickness and weariness? '*L'uomo comincia*', says Papini, '*ad essere scredente anche della dea umanità. E allora non c'è altro che la fuga*'; and so *omnia humana a nobis aliena putamus*.

Mr. Humbert Wolfe's case is not so desperate as this. He does believe in something, *la dea poesia*; and he is not afraid of echoes. Indeed, he seems to wander, wondering, wide-eyed and . . .

apparently artful, down the cañons of the industrial world, listening above all for these:

‘ Not for my tears, your beauty’s interest,  
Nor for my hopes, its trifling dividend,  
Shall I remembered be, O loveliest! ’

he says, or, dare I say, sings, catching a note from Shakespeare’s voice, and, at first, you are carried away. Then, *la chair* becoming *triste* once more, you begin asking yourself why his tears are her beauty’s interest, and why his hopes are its trifling dividend, and, even, you begin to doubt whether there were any tears:

‘ Il pleure dans mon cœur  
Comme il pleut sur la ville; ’

but do we weep nowadays?—

‘ And if we laugh at any mortal thing  
’Tis that we may not weep.’

Have we not caught the habit . . . of laughing?—or grinning?

However, this is not Mr. Humbert Wolfe’s fault, and he will not mind. He can wear his heart on his . . . iambics or trochees, and keep off weary churls like me with his wit, being himself:

‘ Very like the ghost of Heine,  
When he made his little songs  
Out of love’s enormous wrongs,’

as he says (or sings?) of his Pierrot. He is so deft with his versification, that, if you but give him half a chance, he takes you with him:

‘ In the deep blue  
Of heaven mark!  
A cloud no bigger  
Than a lark.

And hear! against  
Your window-pane  
His music vertical  
As rain.

Dare we go out,  
 And face his song?  
 I do not think so,  
 I was wrong.

To walk beneath  
 Your window thus,  
 He does not sing this year  
 For us.'

And another thing too, *nous avons tué le clair de lune*. But Mr. Humbert Wolfe, the poet, lives mostly on moonlit nights, or, should he happen to awaken on a cloudy evening, it is to remember and remind you or her that there is no moon. And he is so ingenuous, in his lovely, sophisticated and artificial manner, that he can, without a twinge or a qualm, set up the old puppets—Pierrot, Pierrette and Pantaloon. They are so suggestive of verses, say the weary; they make a machine that works so smoothly; and it is only Pierrot, after all, or Pierrette, or Pantaloon; Mr. Wolfe has as tough a heart, beneath his iambs and trochees, his delicate rhymes and half-rhymes, as the most indurated *rond-de-cuir* of the Café Royal. And so Mr. Wolfe makes the best of both worlds, and can be accepted in either. But this is really not fair to him. He is, I said, apparently artful; he presents an aspect that the simple can take as a sincere picture of a sensitive poet, and the subtle as . . . Mr. Wolfe amusing himself delicately. But it is better to be simple, for I have a suspicion that, where Mr. Wolfe is concerned, the simple person is right.

F. S. FLINT

*Catullus: The Complete Poems.* Translated and edited by F. A. Wright, M.A. (Routledge & Sons.) 7s. 6d. net.

After describing Mr. F. A. Wright's translation of Catullus as unexpurgated, the publishers feel constrained to admit 'some slight modifications in the case of a few poems'. In every translation there is an involuntary divergence from the intention of the author translated; it is a defect which cannot be avoided; the cause may be partly in the difference of language, but is perhaps equally in the difference of character, which makes it impossible for the translator



to look at the matter from precisely the same angle as the author: he is not in the presence of the actual experience, but only of those traces which the experience has left behind it. If he is to give us even an approximate equivalent of the original, he needs to possess, at least in some measure, the same characteristic qualities of mind. Catullus does not merely copy a poem of Sappho; he possesses something of her exquisite sensibility, but also he has actually experienced, in all its vehement confusion the emotion which she communicates to us, and his translation, if incomplete is of nearly equal value. So, too, Campion had a grace apt enough to translate *Vivamus, mea Lesbia*, a part at least of his emotional nature was sufficiently responsive. But his sympathetic handling of a single poem would not lead us to suggest that Catullus had the same range as Sappho, or Campion as Catullus; in both examples there is already omission, and an involuntary divergence, which would tend to increase. A deliberate and premeditated modification is a very different matter; and Mr. Wright's publishers, who are presumably responsible for what is printed on the loose cover, raise a rather irrelevant moral question which otherwise might have been ignored. Catullus was capable of a brutal obscenity. Terse and direct, it is intended to have the violence of a blow, and has it, as in the epigrams on Cæsar and Mamurra. But this obscenity is not confined to the lampoons. As an example of the kind of modification which Catullus undergoes at the hands of Mr. Wright, take the end of a poem described in the introduction as 'not too strait-laced'.

‘ hunc ego, si placet Dionae  
Pro telo rigida mea cecidi ’

becomes

‘ With Venus’ leave, I took the brat  
Myself, and gave him tit for tat.’

It is sufficiently evident from this example that the attempt to give us a complete translation of Catullus was too ambitious.

We are often invited to put aside this aspect of Catullus, and to consider the grace and pathos of such lines as

‘ Torquatus volo parvulus  
Matris e gremio suae  
Porrigens teneras manus

Dulce rideat ad patrem  
Semhiante labello.'

What is perfect in these lines is the direct and immediate vision; there is no emotion apart from the image evoked, with its definite physical characteristics; the emotion being a harmony of these, in the sense in which the soul has been called a harmony of the body, and inseparable from the physical characteristics, or action, which it accompanies. His praise of *Lestia* is a physical ecstasy, his abuse a physical anguish, and he sees them as complementary to each other:

'Odi et amo, quare id faciam, fortasse requiris,  
Nescio, sed fieri sentio, et excrucior.'

His object is always the action as the only adequate expression of emotion, which he cannot realise as existing apart from it. He is violent in his obscenities, as he is tender in his caresses because he places the physical action before us visibly.

Even apart from the absurd compromise on the moral question, which pretends to offer what it does not, Mr. Wright is seldom successful in his renderings, but the close of XI, which he calls *Farewell to Lestia*, is fine

'Bid her farewell and let her keep  
The legion of her paramours  
And careless break their strength, to fill  
Her idle hours.

Nor think at all of my poor love  
Which by her sin lies all forlorn  
Like the field blossoms which a plough  
Has past and torn.'

F. M.

*The Question Mark.* By M. Jaeger. (Hogarth Press.) 7s. 6d. net.

This novel tells of a young bank clerk who prolongs his life some two hundred years by the familiar means of the cataleptic trance. The account of the twenty-second century experience to which he awakes is ingenious and interesting, and well contrasted with the

present day by a brief description at the end of the book of a dream return to his own period—the oligarchical-democratic, the money grubbing, the fearful.

In Mr. Jaegar's twenty-second century the general conditions are aristocratic in that the superior intellects form the upper class and are accepted as such, but untraditional in that there are no intermediates or administrators of law since the lower class is non-productive, and there is no need for it to be productive. The development of machinery has completely eliminated the competitive force; each individual carries about with him the means to set in motion any machinery that is not self-propelling; that and provisions coupons constitute the whole of personal property. There are two classes only, the intellectuals and the emotionals (or 'normals' as Mr. Jaegar names them). The intellectuals leave the normals entirely to their own resources, though each person is entitled to as much education as he cares to take. The intellectuals have not developed much from the present time, but their conditions are more favourable. The normals live solely for the pleasure of emotional experiences, great and small. They are kept healthy by sport, the rules of training and etiquette of which they observe as a matter of course. When an emotional storm renders the normals unfit for such human labour as is still necessary, the intellectuals take on the work until the crisis has passed. Mixed marriages between the two classes are discouraged, and becoming less and less frequent. In the course of the account, a religious movement sweeps through the normals. A friar claims to be a messiah. The suggestion is that he identifies himself so persistently with his role that he perfectly resembles such a one—auto-suggestion founded on delusion.

The style of this novel is inoffensive, even dignified, but it is a communal style. It suggests that young writers undergo mental-hygiene courses at a health centre; that hereditary tendencies have been taken in time, before they got a hold; the smell of disinfectant lingers still. We get many such decent, sane, thoughtful books—that might have been written by machinery so consistently do they lack the element of individual experience.

# FOREIGN REVIEWS

## AMERICAN PERIODICALS

*The Yale Review*, April.—‘The Tissue-Culture King’, a parable of modern science by Julian Huxley. ‘Two Readings of Earth’, a comparison of the nature poetry of Hardy and Meredith by John Livingstone Lowes. ‘Art as an Approach to Asia’, by George Sarton. ‘Letters from a Michigan Log Cabin, 1830-1834’, written by Elizabeth Margaret Chandler, a young lady of a Quaker family. ‘Europe and the Renaissance of Islam’, by A. E. Prince, is perhaps the most interesting of the political articles, though rather too obvious and unphilosophical.

*The Modern Quarterly*, February-April.—The editor, Mr. V. F. Calverton, continues his analysis of Sex Expression in Literature, and this time deals with the Restoration drama. His general theory, as well as its particular application to the subject in hand, is well summarised in this paragraph:

‘Sex expression in Restoration literature, as in all literature, was determined by the social attitude of the class that the literature represented; the social attitude of the class was determined by its economic structure, its relationship with other classes, its situation of vantage or disadvantage. To say that Restoration literature was free in its approach to sex, unabashed in its descriptions, blunt, salacious, and obscene would be inaccurate, because the flood of religious and scientific literature that appeared was entirely the opposite in its style and tenour. Restoration drama, however, which was expressive of the aristocracy, was free in its descriptions, bold in its presentations, bald in its diction. The abundance of the other writing, nevertheless, was solemn and sombre in character, religious or moral in motif, and expressive of the ethics of the *bourgeoisie*. In brief, we discover again that the sex attitudes of social classes reflect their economic substance, and that this reflection reveals itself in literature, art, science and philosophy.’

Professor Harry Elmer Barnes writes on ‘The Development of Sociology in America’, and the Rt. Hon. J. M. Robertson on ‘The Chaos of the Shakespeare Canon’. There are two legends, by A. J. Kuprin and V. Ivanor, translated from the Russian, and

poems by Mark Van Doren. Two contributors deal with 'The New Negro', an anthology of Negro culture in America which has had quite a sensational success, and there are several other bright and intelligent reviews. *The Modern Quarterly* is a curiously uneven, and sometimes rather a crude journal, but it has the merit, possessed by so few American journals, of an authentic and original vitality.

*The North American Review*, September, December and March.—In the September and December numbers Ruskin's correspondence with Rawdon Brown, now in the British Museum, is published in full. There are many articles of miscellaneous interest in these three numbers, of which we may mention: 'Jean de Balzac', by the Hon. Mrs. Gilbert Coleridge (September); 'The Poetry of Charles Montague Doughty', by Samuel C. Chew, a considerable article containing new biographical facts confirmed by Doughty himself (September); 'Gerhart Hauptmann', by Brian W. Downs; 'Basque Towns', by Waldo Frank; and 'Maurice Barrès', by F. D. Cheydeur, all in the March number. This last number also contains a biographical sketch of Aristide Briand, by the Editor, Mr. George Harvey, formerly American Ambassador in London.

*The American Mercury*, March and April.—The usual articles on Methodism, Ku Klux Klanism and Prohibition. In the March number the Rev. Herbert Parrish writes on 'A New God for America'. Very breezy. Begins thus: 'What this country needs—much more than a good five-cent cigar—is a new God.' Ends thus: 'If you ask me about the name for this new American God, my idea is that it is probably better just to keep the old word for Him, and call Him simply God. Honestly, I think it would scarcely be worth while to change the name.'—'Or the God,' some people might be inclined to add, after reading the reverend author's eupeptic theology. 'Stephen Crane at College' is a biographical sketch of some small value, and John Redfield's 'Proposal for a Reform of the Orchestra' might be of interest to musicians. In the April number Henry Osborne Osgood writes on 'The Anatomy of Jazz', which curiously enough is the title of an article by Don Knowlton in the April number of:

*Harper's Magazine*.—Both writers seem to agree that jazz

orchestration has become a genuine art, but are rather vague as to the possibilities of its development. 'The encouraging thing about jazz', writes Mr. Knowlton, 'is that in its orchestrations it is initiating countless thousands into sound principles of harmony and counterpoint, and thus definitely raising the average level of musical intelligence. Snort if you will, but the fact remains that the shop girl who has heard Paul Whiteman has taken a step toward appreciation of Beethoven's Seventh Symphony.' Mr. Osgood is more cryptic:

'As for the serious development of jazz itself, there is no better way to conclude than with a quotation (Example 15) showing the orchestrator's hand turned to scoring the first successful attempt to raise jazz above the level of the dance hall and the musical comedy stage, Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue". Here are the first measures, as imagined for jazz orchestration by Grofe. Will anyone who heard Ross Gorman play the solo clarinet forget the astonishment he created in the very first measure when, half way up that seventeen-note run, he suddenly stopped playing separate notes and slid for home on a long *portamento* that nobody knew could be done on a clarinet? It's not in any of the books. Ross spent days and days hunting round for a special reed that would allow him to do it. Days and days. That's the spirit that has made jazz what it is. By the way, what is it?'

*Harper's Magazine*, which is noticed here for the first time, aims at a high level of popular journalism. Mr. Julian Huxley asks 'Will Science Destroy Religion?' but does not seem to answer the question in any very definite terms, unless Scientific Humanism is to be called a religion. Bertrand Russell also asks a question: 'What Shall We Educate For?' But since his answer has presumably been published in England, there is no need to refer to it here. H. M. Tomlinson has an earnest little sketch in which he tries to convince two Americans that Herman Melville was a great poet, but is faced with 'a very fine exhibit of transatlantic modesty'.

*The Dial*, April.—George Saintsbury writes on 'Technique' in his characteristic vein. He tells us, among other things, that 'the average three-volume novel was by no means so long as it looked. The volumes were not very thick, and the binding was substantial

for circulating library use; the print was large and largely spaced and margined. You could, in reviewing such things, not by mere 'dipping and skipping' but by honest if skilled reading, despatch a couple of novels between dinner and bedtime without dining very early, or outwatching any Bear of decent and domestic habits.' The 'Last Pages' of Anatole France appear in a translation: they are not very interesting. Paul Morand's 'Paris Letter' is amusing and informative; we are amused to learn that Jean Cocteau has 'yielded ardent obedience to the new current. His conversion, or more accurately, his filial submission to the Catholic religion was much talked of last summer.' It is interesting to know that 'the Super-Realistic writers, the one-time Dadas, have gone over to Bolshevism and have given their allegiance to Moscow'.

*Scribner's Magazine*, March and April.—'The Jameson Raid and the World War', by John Hays Hammond, is a first-hand account of some historical importance—'the real inside story of that romantic event'. It extends to both these numbers of the magazine. In the April number 'A Critical Credo', by Mary M. Colum, is a somewhat unexpected onslaught—unexpected in its milieu—directed against the critical standards familiar to readers of *The New Criterion*. It is only fair—for we are not afraid of it—to give those readers the main outlines of Mrs. Colum's antipathy:

'Believers in the significance of form are in reality the oldest kind of conservatives in literary history; they appear at periods when creative vigor begins to run thin, and they have always ended up in the same way, with the belief that form in itself has a significance apart from what it contains. This inevitably leads to the sort of criticism which seeks to codify literary principles, and to the sort of critic who abstracts from the work of the writers he admires certain qualities which he elevates into literary canons, and he regards no writer as important who does not follow them.

At the moment we have the genesis of that sort of critic among us. For the newer criticism is inclined to cut off entirely all writers or artists whose work does not approach in technic that of certain writers fashionable among intellectuals. For instance, how many of our younger critics extract their poetic standards from the work of Mr. T. S. Eliot, and, what is equally dangerous, their general critical standards from his critical work? Equally, their ideas and

standards in narrative writing are extracted from the work of James Joyce. It is characteristic of so much contemporary criticism, that it can confuse the value of a remarkable writer like Joyce with that of a writer whose work is merely on the margin, as Eliot's is—on the margin of emotion, on the margin of thought, on the margin of profundity: that is, it deals not with profound emotion or profound ideas, but with thin super-refinements which are undoubtedly the real presentments of certain contemporary neuroticisms of thought and feeling.'

The essay that follows is based mainly on a distinction between significant mind and significant material, which are, in their conflicts and relations with each other, held to be 'the only hard and fast criterions of literature'. The qualities that make the artist's mind significant are: excess of intellect, excess of imagination, excess of emotion and excess of vitality. These distinctions are applied to various individuals—to Bernard Shaw, Gabriele d'Annunzio, Maeterlinck and Yeats—and always with convincing acumen. The reaction of the significant mind to its material is shown by relating typical artists like Goethe, Dante, Shakespeare and Molière to the dominant characteristics of their races: more dangerous work this, but done with discretion. Her estimate of Joyce and Proust is high, though it seems too obvious and direct to say that 'each exemplifies in his work two important scientific discoveries reduced to terms of literature: the discovery of the subconscious and the Einstein idea of the relativity of time. Both Proust and Joyce reveal their characters in terms of the subconscious, and both translate into terms of art the Einstein idea of time.' A more significant analogy, both for Proust and for Joyce, could be found in the philosophy of Bergson, and it is questionable whether Mrs. Colum would venture on a comparison with Einstein if she had any profound comprehension of his theories. But for her both Proust and Joyce are overshadowed by the greater emotional power of Dostoevsky, and he, presumably, is the significant mind of our age.

Mrs. Colum's essay is very interesting, one of the most comprehensive and consistent reviews of modern criticism and its relation to modern literature that has appeared in any recent American periodical. It is a pity therefore, that it should be marked by a complete inability to appreciate the critical position which this journal in general, and Mr. Eliot in particular, occupy in England. We



will only ask her to consider two problems: how an excess of intellect is to be reconciled (and *has been* reconciled by the great artists she mentions) with an excess of emotion, imagination or vitality; and whether the depth of emotion is to be measured by its expression in fear (as with Dostoevsky) or by its expression in confidence (as in Dante).

A significant mind is only significant by virtue of its organisation, and the intellect is the only organising faculty known to man. It is the only ultimate measure of values, and values are the only end of criticism.

*The Saturday Review of Literature* (weekly).—We may note as specially interesting among the leading articles contributed to this indispensable periodical: 'Frank Harris', by Temple Scott (February 13th), an extremely personal but fair-minded review of Frank Harris's autobiography, *My Life and Loves*; 'English Criticism', by Frank Swinnerton, anonymous in its charges, and rather peevish in tone, but a fairly complete analysis of the situation (March 6th); 'Mangan and his Rosaleen', by Cameron Rogers (March 13th); 'The Man from Texas' (Colonel House), by Wickham Steed (March 20th).

*The Nation* (weekly).—'The Mystery of Poe', by H. L. Mencken (March 17).

Also received: *The Literary Review of the New York Evening Post*; *Palms*.

H.R.

## FRENCH PERIODICALS

*Commerce*, Spring number.—Italian travel notes by Valery Larbaud, to which he has given as title Maurice Scève's line, 'Le vain travail de voir divers pays', are full of suggestive comments on literature, art and life. He discusses the *fatras* and its development, and the enriching and advance of poetic forms generally; Samuel Butler and his Italian books (M. Larbaud finds Italy truly seen only in three nineteenth century writers: Madame de Staël, Stendhal and Samuel Butler). He notes a great renaissance of English studies in Italy under the influence of Cecchi. He also talks of

some little known pictures of Greffier at Turin, which show a pastoral London with swans on the Thames and women spreading linen on the meadows on the banks—a few yards from the Tower!

Under the title of *Saint Juin de la Primevère*, André Suarès, in addition to a little dialogue between Salome and John the Baptist, contributes reflections on all sorts of subjects. There are too many quotable things to begin quoting. There are further reflections with the same title in the *Nouvelle Revue Française* for April. Other contributions are: *Voies et Rencontres*, adapted from the German of Hugo von Hofmannsthal; *Trois mystiques musulmans*, extracts from three early Eastern mystics, mostly deciphered and published for the first time by Louis Massignon; translations from Russian poems by Hélène Iswolsky. In *Mort et Résurrection*, José Ortega y Gasset is inspired by the picture by El Greco. On Don Juan he says: 'When our whole being desires something integrally without reserves or fears, we fulfil our duty, because the highest duty is fidelity to ourselves. A society in which every individual was able to be faithful to himself would be a perfect society. . . . What does what we call *un homme intègre* mean if it is not a man who is entirely himself and not a tissue of compromises and caprices, concessions to others, to tradition, to prejudice? In this sense Don Juan appears to be a figure of very high morality. . . . He goes about the world loyally searching for something which will completely absorb his capacity for loving. . . . He never finds it. . . . This is the tragedy of Don Juan, the hero without an end.'

*Nouvelle Revue Française*, April.—Further thoughts of André Suarès (returned after a long absence to the *N.R.F.*), with the title of *Don Juin de la Primevère* (see *Commerce*). *Lettres d'un Chinois*, by André Malraux, begin promisingly: 'The more I see of Europeans, the more I listen to them, the more am I convinced that they have never understood what life is. In former ages they invented the devil. I thank them for their imagination. But since the devil died, they seem to be the prey of the greatest divinity of disorder, the mind.' The Chinaman then contrasts Greek thought on man and the world with Chinese. On love he says: 'To desire a woman merely because she is beautiful, what a sign of grossness! . . . In China there is not a courtesan of any quality who is not a cultivated woman capable of adorning the pleasure she gives a man with

the charms she owes to her intelligence. . . . The virtues we demand in a woman are those which please us in a man. It is evident that what touches you in a woman is what is peculiar to her as a woman.' *Episodes Normands*, by Jacques Massoulier, a vivid sketch of country life and manners, is disfigured somewhat by the modern fashion of comparing nature to artificial things.

Benjamin Crémieux, in a review of new plays, says: 'It remains to be discovered whether the theatre is the direct reflection of life, or whether it is not rather, since the triumph of the novel, the reflection of life as it appears in novels—the reflection of a reflection.'

*Le Navire d'Argent*, January, 1926 (received too late for notice in the last number).—The chief contribution is a very fine *Lettre sur les Malades*, by Georges Duhamel, in the character of a doctor writing on his patients, full of understanding and irony. In the flood of satire on doctors in all ages, it is well to have the doctors' standpoint represented. *Le Partage de la Fougasse* (a sort of cake), or *Les Joies de la République*, by André Chamson, is described as a 'divertissement'. It is an amusing little sketch of a fête and a fight in a remote mountain village. *Lettie* is the translation of a good study of an aimless American female in Paris by Robert McAlmon. Jean Prévost contributes a discriminating eulogy of Charlie Chaplin.

The bibliography of American literature translated into French is continued in this number. It is curious to find that only two novels of Henry James have been translated.

*March*.—This is an American number. There are translations of the (unpublished) speech by Walt Whitman on the Eighteenth Presidential Election; an extract from *The Great American Novel*, by William Carlos Williams; an extract from Ernest Hemingway; a chapter from *The Enormous Room* by E. E. Cummings; and one from *The Publicity Agency*, by Robert McAlmon. This last is unpleasant and dirty. Surely at this time of day there is no need for such a violent reaction against Victorian prudery. The convention that there is nothing but bestiality is as false as its opposite.

The bibliography of French translations of American literature is concluded in this number. Mlle. Monnier, *à propos* of the difficulties of translating the slang in these American extracts, quotes some interesting remarks from an essay of Walt Whitman's on *Slang in America*: 'Slang is an attempt on the part of humanity

to escape from the arid literalness of things and to express itself in an unfettered manner, an attempt which, on a higher level, produces poets and poetry.

*April.*—*Les Instituteurs*, an article by Jean Prévost, was given the chief place in this number by Mlle. Monnier, because it speaks not only in Prévost's own name, but in that of the *Navire d'Argent* and of herself. It is a homage to elementary school teachers, 'the real preservers of our civilisation and our science'. According to M. Prévost, early civilisations perished because they were in the hands of a few aristocrats in the midst of an ignorant population who had never been taught to care for their civilisation.

*Diverses manières de se connaître*, by Ramon Fernandez, is an interesting psychological study of the differing introspective methods of Montaigne, Amiel, Proust and an Italian anti-fascist refugee, whom the writer met in England. The analysis of Proust is specially valuable, but it is too closely-knit to quote from or summarise. *Trois Ebauches de Portrait* (Beethoven, Ibsen and Eleonora Duse), and *Cinélandia* (amusing sketches of film-land types) are translations from Rainer Maria Rilke and Ramon Gomez de la Serna respectively.

*L'Aviateur*, by Antoine de Saint Exupéry, is an extract from a novel. The value of this practice of giving isolated extracts from novels may be questioned: they may often fail entirely even to give the writer's quality. *Le Principe de l'Utilité*, by Blaise Cendrars, is another such extract, curious, as it reads like a treatise on modern mechanical progress and the changes this has made in life and language.

A bibliography of German literature translated into French begins in this number, and takes us from the *Nibelungen* to Martin Luther. It is followed by translations of two extracts from the nun-dramatist, Hrotswitha, and fragments of Martin Luther's *Table Talk*—racy and commonsensical with several good stories.

*Les Cahiers du Sud*, March.—Translation of part of *Moby Dick*.

*Les Marges*, 15th April.

## GERMAN PERIODICALS

All the German reviews that have come to hand since the beginning of the year show an exceptional pre-occupation with politics. The most literary of them all, *Die Literatur*, has not been able to forbear two or three political articles and numerous political allusions; while the others, *Die neue Rundschau* and *Die Weltbühne* in particular, seem almost to have given themselves up to current political questions.

*Die Literatur* (Berlin: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt).—The untiring and thorough Paris correspondent of this review, Herr Otto Grautoff, devotes most of his article in the February number to a consideration of relations between French and German writers since the signing of the Locarno Treaty. He finds a good deal of work being done on both sides to further mutual understanding. Rainer Maria Rilke has translated a selection from Paul Valéry, which, Herr Grautoff remarks, will do much to assist towards a comprehension of the French 'Psyche' across the Rhine. Without seeing the translations, or even, perhaps, after seeing them, one may take leave to doubt this; but it is, of course, true that Rilke, who lived for years in France as secretary to Rodin, and is the best representative of the German Symbolist school, is the best qualified German poet living, except perhaps Stefan George, to render such poetry as Valéry's. In criticism the most important work has been done by Ernst Robert Curtius, who has followed up his earlier essays on Claudel, Suarès, Bergson and Gide with a new volume entitled *Französischer Geist im modernen Europa*, in which the most important chapter is on Marcel Proust. Incidentally the long-expected German edition of Proust has begun to appear, and a word will be said on the subject in a moment. The work of making German literature better known in France is being done chiefly by the *Nouvelle Revue Française*, by the *Revue de Genève*, and now again by the *Mercure de France*, which, after long aloofness from things Germanic, has just resumed its rubric 'Lettres allemandes'. And there are critics who say that Locarno was a delusion!

In the same number of *Die Literatur* four reviews of more than ordinary interest, namely, of Thomas Mann's latest volume of essays, *Bemühungen*, 'lay philosophy' by the most influential 'lay philosopher' in Germany to-day, a kind of combination of H. G.

Wells and Galsworthy; of Oscar Wilde's Correspondence, just issued in a German edition, excellently done by the regular Wilde-translator, Max Meyerfeld; of Wedekind's Correspondence, a revelation of an aspiring and tragic life which only the readers of the dramatist's last plays can have fully understood; and of all—at least we hope all—the books issued recently in connection with the celebration of the Jean Paul centenary. Jean Paul may be a too-much-neglected writer, even in Germany, but a dozen books on him within the past few weeks is really an excessive allowance. The English student of Jean Paul, however, thanks to a few discriminating remarks on each volume, will be able to take his choice. Labour-saving *Die Literatur* certainly is, as has been remarked before in this section.

The March number has an article on the Rhineland occupation, a peg to hang a number of literary and general cultural observations; also an essay on Pirandello's plays—this rather late in the day since the Sicilian dramatist, who a few months ago threatened to oust even Bernard Shaw in the esteem of German theatre-goers, has soon declined. Herr Stresau, however, gives the best appreciation of Pirandello's talent we have so far seen in a German review. The 'Amerikanischer Brief', in this number, is comprehensive and interesting, reviewing, among many other things, Mr. Canby's attack on the 'Rotarians', and two books which will certainly have to go down on the reading-list, Gustavus Meyer's *History of American Idealism*, and E. A. Burt's *Metaphysical Foundations of Modern Physical Science*.

*Die neue Rundschau* (Berlin: S. Fischer).—In the March number Professor Moritz Bonn has a well-considered article called 'Gegenkolonisation', dealing with the problem of colonisation placed before Europe by the results of the peace and the United States emigration policy. Given the re-building of Europe on a number of small, national units, in distinction to large, economically practicable units, he can see nothing but a universal extension of the principle of protection. The literary contributions to this number, except a translation of Romain Rolland's essay on Mozart, are not particularly distinguished; but an autobiographical essay by Klaus Mann, son of Thomas Mann, and Germany's latest 'youngest' writer, a kind of German Raymond Radiguet, may be noted, in case

this young man fulfils all the promise some of the German critics are making of him. The April number opens with another political article, *Geist und Politik*, by Alfred Weber, a writer with a definite philosophy and ability to bring politics into relation with the intelligence and general culture. His essay is, briefly, a plea for the greater admixture of intelligence with political leadership in Germany. The preliminary survey, which emphasises the value of Venetian statesmanship as a model for to-day, achieves the almost impossible in not mentioning Signor Mussolini.

*Die literarische Welt* (Berlin: Ernst Rowohlt).—This is a weekly literary newspaper, now in its second year. It has the form, but not the same arrangement or literary quality, of the *Times Literary Supplement*, and it is illustrated with photographs and drawings. Its articles are most unequal in their literary distinction; but appearing weekly as it does, it provides a more thorough survey of current German literature than any other German review.

In the January 1st number an amusing account, with anecdotes, of Oppen von Blowitz, the 'King of Reporters' and the celebrated *Times* correspondent at the Conference of Berlin, a journalist who holds, and deservedly so, a place in European history. The following week the most interesting 'feature'—the word seems apt—is an interview with Franz Werfel about his new play, *Paulus unter den Juden*, from which an extract is given. It appears that the drama is written round St. Paul just before his conversion, and that the inspiration has come partly from a recent visit to Palestine, partly from Mr. George Moore. In the three following numbers much space is taken up with a very damaging review, by Dr. Ernst Robert Curtius, of the German translation of Marcel Proust, with a not very effective reply by the translator, Rudolf Schottländer, and observations by other writers, from all of which it appears that Germany has not been as fortunate as England in her translation of Proust. It is not often that one can say as much of translations. In the January 29th number Paul Wiegler begins a series of descriptions of the last hours of great writers, some of it effective writing. The February 12th number has a long review of Hilaire Belloc's *The Servile State*, only recently issued in German. This book, and D. H. Lawrence and *The Constant Nymph*, seem to be Germany's latest discoveries in English literature. In the April 9th number

a malicious little anecdote, which will probably touch many consciences. André Gide some time ago sold part of his library by auction, and among the books were some with personal dedications. Soon after he received a book from Henri de Régnier inscribed: 'To André Gide, for his next sale.'

*Die Weltbühne* (Charlottenburg: Verlag der Weltbühne).—Numbers for all the weeks of March and April received. Nearly all the articles are political. The film-chronicle is worth reading by anyone interested in the cinema who realises—and anyone interested in the cinema must realise—that the Germans have so far developed a specialised art of the screen-play on more original and intelligent lines than any other nation.

A.W.G.R.

### RUSSIAN PERIODICALS

*Blagonamerenny* (Brussels. 4s.).—The January-February issue, the first of this interesting periodical, curiously named 'The Well-Intentioned', starts off with a long manifesto, from which, in spite of its verbiage, we gather that the editor is in favour of objectivity in literature. 'Man,' he asserts, 'if he is conscious of his manhood, would sooner consent to see himself reflected in the mirror with a strange face than with his own crooked one. . . . That is, because crooked truth is more hideous than untruth, and more false.' This is confusing, but the editor 'intends well'. Stripped of its verbiage, his argument is that man can see himself only in the ratio that he gets away from himself. Literature must have 'literary' foundations, is a thing in itself, free of all extraneous matters such as problems, etc. 'The justice of literary history is mathematical.' It is rather in the nature of an ante-climax to read his conclusion: 'The chief basis of the *Blagonamerenny* (Well-Intentioned) is that its contributors have their own basis for their well-intentionedness.'

It must be admitted, however, that there are some excellent contributions in the number, both of a creative and a critical nature. K. Mochulsky writes an amusing article on 'Proletarian Lyricism', in which he describes the curious impasse which the Bolshevik poets have reached. The normal themes having been banished, only victorious hymns and triumphal marches and exulting chants remain. But you can't go on writing these for ever. Proletarian poetry has always been ideologic and abstract. Life is alien to it. It is inspired



by theories and theses. It has a bookish relation to reality. 'Industrial motives' dominate it. Open a proletarian anthology, says the author, and what titles do you see? 'The Blacksmith', 'Song About Iron', 'The Joy of Labour', 'The Factory', 'The Mason', 'Muscles', 'The Sempstress', 'The Machine Paradise', 'The Factory Idyll', 'Behind the Loom'. These are the typical themes allowed by 'class-consciousness'. Neither mystery nor magic exists for these poets. As for tragic feelings, they are simply atrophied. Love they have no use for, since any surrender to emotions is bound to injure 'the cause'. And the emancipated woman 'comrade' will not stand for any comparison with Beatrice; such a comparison, we are assured, 'can only offend her'.

A particularly terse and valuable article 'On the Present State of Russian Literature' is contributed by Prince D. Sviatopolk-Mirsky. I presume it is the same Mirsky who writes for Anglo-American periodicals, and whose 'Contemporary Russian Literature', published recently by Knopf in New York, is the most comprehensive and intelligent survey we have in the English language. Prince Mirsky's virtue is impartiality, rare in Russians, who, generally speaking, are inclined to be 'tendencious'. An avowed conservative, he is yet sufficiently objective not to overlook merit in artists produced by Soviet Russia, nor fault in literary *émigrés* who have sought shelter out of their own country. One extraordinary observation which he makes is worth noting here: Russian literature, which in the generation preceding the war and the revolution was one in its hatred of life and in terror before its senselessness, has grown more cheerful since these devastating events took place. 'Does this mean', asks Prince Mirsky, 'that a live dog is better than a dead lion? And were we such lions then? Or, having once struck bottom, has every shore become beautiful?'

Other interesting features are 'A Theatre Without a Repertory', in which the author, Evgeny A. Znosko-Borovsky, shows how the Russian stage is dominated by foreign plays; 'Concerning Gratitude', aphorismic thoughts by the well-known poetess, Marina Tzvetaya, who also contributes a poem; 'Some Thoughts on Poetry', by Sophia Zernova; 'From the Book "Many Waters"', fragments of travel from a diary of Ivan Bunin, etc. Archives and book reviews fill out this excellent number of the *Blagonamerenny*.

## DANISH PERIODICALS

*Tilskueren*, January, 1926.—The chief article in this number is one by Professor Valdemar Vedel, on 'Hans Andersen's Tales in a European Light'. The author says: 'If I were to try to explain in one word the fairy tale success that Andersen's fairy tales had in Germany, France and England, I should say that the secret was that people found, in these little prose tales, all the favourite romantic and humanistic "motives" of the age, as well as all the stock themes of folk humour and children's imagination in all ages, but revived in the most delightful fashion by the "tone" of the narrator, the voice of the poet.' Andersen's sources are analysed in detail, and the author goes on to say: 'We may find in earlier imaginative literature, both in the artistic and in the folk fairy tales, many of the motives and impulses of Andersen's tales; but you must have all felt that we have not before trod the actual soil on which Andersen's tales grew, nor breathed the spiritual atmosphere that ripened them. . . . They are universal, but at the same time absolutely Danish.'

*February*.—This number is largely devoted to politics and history. On the purely literary side there are 'The Heron, the Fishes and the Crab' (a Buddhist legend charmingly 'retold' by Valdemar Rørdam), and a 'literary feuilleton' by the editor. He signals out from the books reviewed *The Poets of Denmark*, a big work by Professor Hans Brix, of which two volumes have appeared. It is to deal with poets and poetry from the earliest times, and is refreshingly free from academic narrowness and tradition. Other books worth mention are: *The Fruit of the Olive Tree* (travel pictures) by Johannes Jørgensen; and *Memories* (of Holger Drachmann) by Emmy Drachmann; *New Year*, by Thorkild Gravhind, and *Erik Gudmand*, Part 2, by Alexander Svedstrup, both novels of peasant life whose authors are 'born storytellers'. M. Levin also deals with a large number of other novels of peasant life and advises the authors to go to school with Reymont, whose *Winter* he reviews here. Among good novels are: *I Skæbnens Vold* (In the Power of Fate) by Esther Noach; *Mødrenes Synder* (The Mother's Sins), by Otto Kampen; and *Graa Eros* (Grey Love), by Jørgen Bukdahl.

*March*.—This number is largely of political and educational interest

*April.*—An article by Harald Høffding, 'A Modern Buddhist', might interest M. Henri Massis. The modern Buddhist is a German, Arthur Pfungst, the first volume of whose collected works has just appeared. There are seven epigrams by Kai Friis Møller, of no great merit, but I was touched by one describing a linguist as a 'man who speaks seventeen languages and has nothing to say in any of them'. A new book, reviewed by Professor Geismar, on the *Religious Development of Søren Kierkegaard*, by P. A. Heiberg, sounds interesting.

Chr. Rimestad reviews a large number of new books of verse. From *Aarets Højtider* (The Festivals of the Year) by the distinguished novelist, Johannes V. Jensen, some fine lines are quoted. The reviewer compares Jensen's greatness to that of Oehlenschläger. His philosophy is austere. Thøger Larsen, in *Limfjordsange* (Limfjord Songs) tries, like so many European poets to-day, to startle and arrest the reader by unexpected expressions. Valdemar Rørdam's *Blomstervers* (Flower Verses) is a pendant to his last volume, *Fugleviser* (Bird Songs). Both collections 'put the Muse in fetters'. The verse is obscure, and it is difficult to say whether this is due to depth or imperfection of thought, or to the poet's imagination running away with him. A charming poem on the dandelion is quoted. Aage Bernstein republishes in *Ungdoms Sang* (Song of Youth) such of his early verse as he thinks worth preserving. The reviewer also deals with a number of books of verse by women, and remarks that it is disconcerting to find what difficulty Danish women, in contrast to those of other countries, find in writing even passable verse. Axel Henriques' *Sganarels Kjøbenhavnerviser* and Viggo Barfoed's *Viser og Vers* (Songs and Verses), light verse, are both of them good of their kind. The former is in the vein of Raoul Ponchon, but not on the same level.

F. S. F.

### SWISS PERIODICALS

*Neue Schweizer Rundschau* (Zurich: Orell Füssli).—The review that now appears monthly under this title is a new and greatly improved edition of a fortnightly called *Wissen und Leben*. This was rather narrow in its scope, and used to discuss questions of purely domestic Swiss interest. Now, under the direction of a well-known Swiss literary critic, Dr. Max Rychner, the review has become

more international in its outlook, and also more attractive to those who want to know what is being written by those Swiss writers who keep themselves distinct from Paris, or Berlin or Munich. The January and February numbers have a rapid but adequate sketch of recent German-Swiss literature, by the editor. Most of the names are unfamiliar, the exceptions being those of writers, such as Jakob Schaffner and Hermann Kesser, who have generally appeared in German literary histories. But the critic wisely summarises actual works to show the elementary enquirer the kind of writer he is being introduced to in each instance. In the January number also a translation of Paul Valéry's essay, *La Crise de l'Intelligence*. In the February number Herr Walter Nigg has an admirable essay on Newman, considered—and in Germany this seems to be true—as the chief expression of the *Sehnsucht* of our time. It follows that what is given is less an account of Newman's philosophy, which the writer considers to have been over-valued, than an examination of his personality and individual influence, especially during the twenty years he spent in the Church of England.

The April number, a particularly good number, has an essay on Hölderlin by the chief German Hölderlin-specialist, Professor Zinkernagel, introducing two newly-discovered juvenile poems and a number of other more or less important fragments which will eventually appear in the forthcoming definitive edition of the poet's works. The critical apparatus is adequate and often illuminating. Other articles worth mentioning are Ernst Howald's, on the psychology of Proust, and Henri D'Armentières, who has discovered the origin of Blaise Cendrars's novel, *L'Or*, in a feuilleton in a Basle paper of the sixties, giving an account of an adventurer named Suter. Those who have read the novel may be recommended to read this essay side by side with it.

A.W.G.R.

*Revue de Genève*, March, 1926.—This number has a very interesting article by Camille Mauclair on 'Protestantism and the Secret Meaning of the Romances of Chivalry'. M. Mauclair started from the standpoint that these romances could not have been the infantile nonsense ridiculed in Don Quixote. They interested many highly intellectual people, and they do not give a true picture of the age, in which there was no chivalry nor idealisation of women.

Thanks to the almost unknown researches of Péladan, the real significance of these romances has been discovered. They are *romans à clef*. What M. Maclair calls 'preprotestantism', i.e., heresy or revolt against the corruption of the Catholic Church, dates from the beginning of the Middle Ages, and the romances of chivalry were the gospel of the various sects of 'heretics', and the minstrels, troubadours and jongleurs, themselves initiates, were its secret missionaries. The etymology of the names of the characters helps to discover the underlying meaning of the stories: Renart is the *roi de l'artifice*, the Roman Catholic clergy. The Courts of Love did not meet to discuss mere empty questions of the etiquette of love; they were the meetings of the initiated to hold council on religion and politics. Cervantes himself knew the real meaning of the romances; Dante and Rabelais were both preprotestants. The theory appears to derive some support from the well-known anti-papal views of Walther von der Vogelweide, the chief of the German Minnesingers, and, therefore, according to this theory, the chief messenger of the new gospel in Germany.

*Adieu, beau désordre*, or *Notes sur la jeune Littérature et la Morale*, is by a young Swiss writer, Denis de Rougemont, who is acutely disquieted by the tendencies of the young French writers of to-day. They have lost the social sense. All their writings glorify men of a profoundly anti-social type. M. de Rougemont traces the evil to Barrès and André Gide. This attitude leads to disgust with all life, which is *surréalisme*. *Surréalisme*, he thinks, is the result of an immense fatigue. 'Fatigue is one of the most important elements in our psychology. The literature of the advance-guard is the daughter of fatigue. . . . The Muse has had too many sleepless nights.' 'Modern love is the love of tired persons.' 'The sharp lucidity of our psychological writers is the almost inhuman state of one who has not slept. . . . In art, fatigue is one of the states that are richest in new visions.' M. Rougemont does not deny the enormous effort to free itself from universal hypocrisy which was made by the preceding generation, but they left only lassitude to the generation that followed. An individual conscience, a social sense, have to be recreated and a new faith found. The morality of to-morrow will be a complete reaction from that of to-day (after so many cocktails, how delicious water will taste!). He thinks that

there are signs of new leaders: Jean Prevost and perhaps Drieu la Rochelle.

Hugh Walpole's *The Old Ladies* has been running serially in this review.

Mr. Middleton Murry contributes the English *Chronique Nationale*, and takes as his subject the 'Renaissance of Classicism in England'. Virginia Woolf and T. S. Eliot are cited as 'serious classicists', and others are 'cynical'. We cannot help thinking that some such mishap has befallen Mr. Middleton Murry as befell Walter Scott's schoolfellow. You will remember the brilliant boy, who always had an answer ready, and who fiddled with a waistcoat button while he answered. One day Scott cut off the button, and the boy became dull and stupid. I am not asserting that Mr. Middleton Murry is dull and stupid. Far from it. But something has happened to him; perhaps Mr. Osbert Sitwell cut off his button—if he ever had one—when he satirised a certain Mr. Muddleton Moral.

April. 'Quatrains Valaisans', by Rainer Maria Rilke, the German poet, writing in French. 'La Couleur (translated from a Cuban writer, A. Hernandez Cata), a moving story of the isolation of the intelligent educated negro. Max Rychaer contributes an article on the history of the novel in German Switzerland.

F.S.F.

# THE NEW CRITERION

A QUARTERLY REVIEW

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VOL. IV, No. IV

OCTOBER, 1926

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## A COMMENTARY

MR. KIPLING'S 'BENEFIT'      On the seventh of July Mr. Rudyard Kipling (see the *Morning Post* of July 8th) 'received at the hands of the Earl of Balfour the Gold Medal of the Royal Society of Literature. The occasion was the Centenary Banquet of the Society, held at the New Princes' Restaurant, Piccadilly. Lord Balfour presided, and the company included distinguished representatives of the world of Art and Letters.'

Mr. Kipling's words on that occasion seem to reflect a certain melancholy, though we draw no inferences. Whether Mr. Kipling found it an occasion for elation or dejection we do not know; but the reader of the newspaper account finds it an occasion for a word in support of Mr. Kipling against any odium that may attach to the receipt of a Gold Medal at the hands of the Earl of Balfour. His speech was a good one, and has peculiar pertinence to Mr. Kipling's own reputation. His words about Swift are worth remembering:

'A man of overwhelming intellect and power goes scourged through life between the dread of insanity and the wrath of his own soul warring with a brutal age. He exhausts mind, heart and brain in that battle; he consumes himself; and perishes in utter desolation. Out of all his agony, remains one little book, his dreadful testimony against his fellow-kind, which to-day serves as a pleasant tale for the young under the title of *Gulliver's Travels*.'

It seems possible that Mr. Kipling may have been speculating on the chance of being remembered chiefly by *The Jungle Book* (as a tale for children) or the *Just-So Stories*. The world, he remarks, will extract from fiction 'just so much of truth or pleasure as it requires for the moment'. It is true that the meaning of a work of art is always relative to the world in which the reader lives, and to the reader's needs, desires and prejudices, to his knowledge and his ignorance. It is only more obviously true of a writer like Mr. Kipling, who is eminently, and by his own confession too, a teller of tales. Mr. Kipling's prose is liable to be qualified by the superior reader as merely brilliant *reportage*. Reportage it is, and sometimes, as in *Captains Courageous*, indifferent reportage: Gloucester fishermen have been able to detect inaccuracies in that book. But the greatest master of the short story in English is more than a reporter. We do not refer to Mr. Kipling's influence upon political or social life: his popularisation of the Empire, his introduction of India and the Colonies into the sphere of consciousness of the inhabitant of the London suburb, a work industriously followed by dozens of story-writers. To discuss these matters we have hardly yet sufficient perspective. But the work of Kipling as a whole has a *sense*, a meaning, which few of its readers will trouble to apprehend; but without apprehending which no one is competent to judge its greatness or abate its value.

#### THE CITY

Meanwhile an evening journal has published a photograph of the Bishop of London, complete with golf-bag and tennis racket, leaving for New Zealand, for, we are told, his first holiday in twenty-five years. We do not grudge the Bishop his holiday; the episcopal function is a very arduous one; it should be interrupted by more frequent vacations. But it is unfortunate that the Bishop's absence should occur at the same time as renewed rumours of the design to destroy the City Churches. Since the first attempt was made, several years ago, the church of St. Magnus Martyr has been concealed, on the side from which its beauty was most conspicuous, by a large industrial structure (not ill-favoured in itself) which reduces the church to the proportions and importance of a museum piece. This is bad enough, but in default of any central direction of municipal planning, it is what we must expect; and it is easier to demolish undesirable buildings



than to erect desirable ones. But if those responsible for the preservation of these shrines wish themselves to destroy them, is it not at least to be required, by the people to which these guardians are morally responsible, that a public statement of the ecclesiastical exigencies, in the name of which this demolition is indicated, should be spread abroad? It is only what employers and trades-unions are constantly being called upon to do, whenever there is a strike.

The *Union of Benefices and Disposal of Churches (Metropolis) Measure, 1926*, as passed by the National Assembly of the Church of England, and in the form in which it is in the hands of the members of Parliament for this session, may be obtained for sixpence from H.M. Stationery Office. This measure would—or will—give authority to a ‘Metropolitan Benefices Board’ to be constituted, for the destruction contemplated. The proceeds of the demolitions (*i.e.*, chiefly the utilisation of the sites, we presume, for commercial buildings) are to be applied ‘for the promotion of religion in accordance with the principles of the Church of England’.

We renounce any attempt to appeal to our Shepherds on the argument for Art, or the beauty of London. We would remind them rather—meeting them on what should be their own ground—that if the church invisible is in decay, it is hardly likely, in the long run, to be restored by the destruction of visible churches. A visible church, whether it assembles five hundred worshippers or only one passing penitent who has saved a few minutes from his lunch hour, is still a church: in this it differs from a theatre, which if it cannot attract large enough audiences to pay, is no better than a barn. The destruction of a church which has the added consecration of antiquity and even a little beauty, is a movement towards the destruction of *the Church*, with Disestablishment on the way. Possibly some reflections of this nature might give our Shepherds pause: we shall cease to appeal in the name of Christopher Wren and his school, and appeal in the name of Laud and the *beauty of holiness*.

# THUCYDIDES AND THE DISCIPLINE OF DETACHMENT

By W. A. THORPE

IT is a pity that scholarship in the process of time has made a corner in Thucydides, for criticism is thereby defrauded, and the estimate of the writer obscured by erudition. The strength and severity of Thucydides' mind have compelled with the few a limited homage, and he introduced habits of thought and modes of inquiry which are second nature to scientific historians; but the occasional complexity of his style has frightened laymen with the illusion that Thucydides is a difficult author, and the discussion of his work has thus been confined to those who have the equipment to elucidate, but neither the insight nor the knowledge of other literatures required for criticism. The History, buried in 'cloistral inanities' by the Classens and Poppo of the nineteenth century, has thus become an obstacle to schoolboys, or a 'source' for historians of Greece, so that the character of Thucydides as a writer is forgotten in his language or his subject. On his integrity, and, more easily, on his reticence, many axes have been ground, and until late years there have been only two studies of him which deserve to be called enlightened, one by Professor Bury, the other a little known essay of Jebb's, on the speeches in Evelyn Abbot's *Hellenica*. The recent European war did the historian good service; don't <sup>it</sup> had him in dug-outs, conjuring with comparisons; the Funeral Oration was quite frequently quoted, and Professor Murray was moved to analogy on the Thucydidean text of 'like events which may be

expected to happen hereafter'. The fruit of this revival appears in a recent book by Mr. G. F. Abbot (Routledge, 7s. 6d.), which does make some attempt to treat Thucydides as a literary personality, for war 'made many things real which formerly seemed aureal—yesterday and to-day appeared to meet in his pages and to illumine each other'. We are inclined to agree with this latest contributor, that his book is not a contribution to learning, but in some measure to the understanding of the historian, and it is at least refreshing because it is about Thucydides, a writer, and not about Athenian economics or the character of Nikias. Mr. Abbot only once becomes speculative, and when he deviates into controversy he comes back with a sane judgment, this being especially so in his adjudication of the celebrated conflict of Ullrich and Classen, concerning the dates at which the history was composed. But in spite of Joseph Conrad, and what we have to say hereafter, there seems no need whatever for the suggestion that a master of narrative prose owed his obscurities to Thracian blood and an ignorance of Attic, rather than to the complications of Gorgias. The concluding chapter is rather sentimentally entitled 'A Possession for ever', but surely by the phrase *κτῆμα ἐς αἰεὶ* Thucydides meant nothing more than a 'work of reference', which may be pulled down every now and then whenever occasion requires *αἰεὶ*—a rendering much more in accord with prefatory modesty and the habitual meiosis of this historian. When we have sighed for its journalism Mr. Abbot's is an able book, and shows at times a certain discrimination of quality in writing; but it can hardly claim to be criticism because it makes no attempt to place Thucydides in the thought of even his own time; and besides this, it lacks any canon of literary values.

The man, Thucydides, is the most significant omission in the History; but although references to himself are only made where they are strictly relevant to the course

of events, or the composition of their record, it is necessary to assemble the character of the writer in order to understand the quality of his book. When, in 431, Corinth lit the flare that discovered to Spartan quietism the acquisitiveness of Athens, Thucydides was of an intellectual maturity which seems never to have been young and certainly did not grow old. It may be only a coincidence that Thucydides, a Thracian, and Aristotle of Stagira, both hailed from the northern coasts of the Ægean, but they share a certain hardmindedness which led them both to political realism, and in Thucydides is of lower strata than all his devotion to Periklean Athens. He came of an ancestry of northern and half savage rulers, who must govern hard in order to live, and until the fifth century scarcely touched the fringe of Hellenic culture; and from them he inherited a temper of pride and mastery, and an estate rich in mines, which had united his kinswoman, Hegesipyle, to Miltiades, and so to one of the oldest governing families in Athens. Thucydides was thus prince and millionaire, and as Kimon's cousin admitted to the close corporation of enlightened aristocrats who created what we call the Athenian democracy. He was above all a mingling of barbarism with civilisation, entirely Thracian in character, entirely Athenian in upbringing, a realist by instinct, and by tradition an aristocrat; and these two characters found a congenial nursery in two great influences of his early life, the sophistic movement, and Perikles in his Athens. Thus, when the History begins, we find an intellectual attitude and a principle of character, *ferocitas* and culture, realism and rationalism met together in the abstruse amalgam which is the mind of its author. The History is witness to this fusion, or rather is this fusion, and it calls as much for surprise as for admiration that Thucydides should have been fit to conceive and execute the first book that lays claim to the title of authentic history.

He succeeded mainly because his native realism was informed by the reason of the Sophists. Hellenic thought, which in its beginnings never divided itself into individual and private sciences, may be traced in a single continuity from the early part of the sixth century until the time of Aristotle. It had four main stages, and it has scarcely been emphasised enough how significant is Thucydides' position in this development, and in what way it explains the character of his History. It began of course in wonder, and the naive but accurate empiricism of Thales and his successors, whose virtue was the discovery of the scientific method, and whose constant endeavour was to trace in phenomena a single *physis*, or law, which would explain the Way Things Happen. But after four 'elemental' philosophers had explained all phenomena by one, and after Empedokles had agreed that there was something in what they all said, and had expanded into earth, air, fire, and water, Anaxagoras, lost in an infinity of causes, was constrained to abandon experience, and drag in Reason for a device. So that Anaxagoras, whose pupil Thucydides is said to have been, is half way to the second stage, the Sophists who turned in upon themselves, and discovered doubt as a method of investigation. But the Sophists, who had set up Reason, enthroned it so high that it fell from illumination into dialectic, and was used to impugn its own validity. In the third stage therefore Plato tempered with morality and mysticism this dangerous decrepit reason, and made his transcendental idealism, which provoked the sanity of Aristotle to refute it, and brought back Hellas and Europe to a system of common sense, in which reason and experience held an equal share.

Now the mind of Thucydides was moulded in the third quarter of the fifth century, when reason was still the choicest instrument, before Sokrates had erected *phronesis* to supersede it. Thucydides was of too independent a spirit to subscribe to a single master, but, having within

his compass the tradition which had made him, he was ready with a method of sober and constructive doubt. Thus equipped, he turned his instrument, not like Empedokles and Demokritos, to nature, nor, like his contemporary sophists, to the twistings and reversals of dialectic, but to the deeds of men. Thucydides was thus led to observe the events of humanity as phenomena in a natural world, to examine those proximate causes of them which are called motives, and so to present a *physis* of human action which was not embodied in a transcendental norm, but perpetually evident in the actions he described; for the Way Things Happen will best tell you what they really are. For this reason perhaps Thucydides has been charged with a rather sinister detachment which would explain away the puppet show and smile secretly. He has reserve, and not always a disinterested reserve at that, but it is difficult to read even a dozen chapters without the conviction that he was in the strongest sense moved to write of momentous happenings. *Your* war, says Thucydides, must always be the greatest of all wars, and in the statistical 'records', to which he is so addicted, one may detect the cry of the heart which his historical method denied him. He believed in Athens, and that was why he wished to write a history which others might believe.

That brings us to the second influence which determined his ethos, Perikles in his Athens. It filled him with a recondite passion which quickened the dry synthesis of observations, and turned the most jejune narrative to literature. There was this prime sympathy between the statesman and his historian, that the Alkmaeonidæ—for Perikles' mother was a daughter of that line—in their *polis*, and the house of Olorus in its wilder Thrace, had it in their blood to order the ways of men; and both Perikles and Thucydides, disciples of the Greek illumination, had added to this heritage an imperious idealism, which looked on the inhabitants of Athens as neither subjects nor

fellow-citizens, but as material to that art of city making, which the Alkmaeonidæ, like the Medici, had always taken as their prerogative. But it is important to remember that there were two Athens, and only one was a democracy; that which had used the Delian fiction to make an empire of conquests, and so 'adorned itself like a vain woman with jewels', was not a democracy, but a good management, which made it a matter of policy to be called *δημοκρατία*. It knew how to win a sanction from the cheers of an assembly, and when it conquered it fought, as Thucydides understood, in the name of an ideal but for a prize. This was the 'copy'; its 'form' is described in the speeches of Perikles. Every year of the Peloponnesian war an oration was made over the dead, and of these Thucydides records one only. But the Athens of the 'Funeral Oration' was not a city, but a concept of the reason, Perikles' 'Republic'; and it was mainly this Athens which provoked in Thucydides the admiration of which he was so afraid. What is called his 'detachment', leaves his narrative of the war in stark reality, touched with regret; but it is regret for an idea. In 425 Thucydides lost his share in the actual city which might realise this idea; and there is a probable tradition that it was Kleon's doing. Thucydides quite simply hated Kleon, less on account of his own banishment than because, in his view, demogogy was sterilizing the virtue that was in the city. So Thucydides, the historian, feared within him two enemies, an intellectual passion, and a personal embitterment, which would now and again break through the curtain of detachment.

Besides the Sophists and Perikles two other influences are apparent in the history. In the course of the 'enlightenment' language and thought went hand in hand, and the Sophists were professors of 'style', as well as of logic. Since, moreover, the Greek language had already learnt to *record*, it was the chief concern of rhetoricians like Gorgias of Leontine to develop language to be an instrument of

persuasion and analysis—an object of great importance in societies which still communicated chiefly by word of mouth. Oratory thus became the canon of prose writing in general, and the antithetical character of the Greek tongue, that is apparent in every μέν . . . δέ was intensified by the dialectical bias of its first deliberate teachers. Their undisciplined reason must see two or more sides to everything, and they wrote as they thought. Prose, which in Herodotus, had been a simple chain of ideas, now became a framework, and Thucydides made of it a perfect instrument of logical narrative. But the speeches are experiments in language, and they belong to a stage when thought had attained a precision to which the instrument was not yet perfectly attuned. In Thucydides language fits a sequence of events, but it is only a fine mantle for abstraction or analysis.

When we come to the last influence we touch on controversy. Tragedy, which was vested in religion, was perhaps the widest cultural influence of the fifth century, and although religion was to Thucydides a phenomenon of society, he can scarcely have forgotten his background. On the strength of certain peculiarities, the speeches (said to be 'choric'), certain 'tragic phrases', and the Melian dialogue, Thucydides has been credited with giving his book a 'tragic' structure. But granted these things, it is quite needless to suggest that a professed historian should deliberately adopt a dramatic method, more especially as the composition of the history can be explained adequately on lines which Thucydides himself is at pains to specify. The influence of tragedy appears, on the contrary, in conception rather than in method. Unconsciously he thought in terms of tragedy, and it may well be that the Sicilian disaster seemed to be the great *peripety* of an overweening city. The theme of the book is, like Gibbon's, degeneration from a golden age; and where Polybius interprets Rome's maturity by tracing her



growth Thucydides would seek the qualities of a perfection in the manner of its decline.

The Peloponnesian war falls into three sections, which explain the general structure of Thucydides' History: the ten years' war, ending with the Peace of 421; six years and ten months of armed peace, and a further ten years of war, opening with the Sicilian expedition, whereof Thucydides recorded three. At the outset of the war in 431, Thucydides, divining its magnitude, began to prepare himself for writing its history. He therefore set himself to take notes, to copy documents, and above all to write down the accounts of eyewitnesses, hoping when the war ended to make them into a consecutive narrative. After his failure at Amphipolis (425) it 'befell him' to be an exile from his country, so that he passed to and fro among the combatants, and had greater opportunity to observe and to inquire. After the Peace, optimistically concluded for fifty years, Thucydides, whose Thracian estate offered seclusion, engaged himself in writing up the war which he thought was over. For that reason, doubtless, he gave up accumulating evidence, and when he came to see that the Peace was most germane to the war, his scanty notes permitted of only a brief and bare analysis of the years between. The Sicilian enterprise once more showed him the continuity, and his former methods were resumed until ten years afterwards the war actually reached its close, and Thucydides returned under amnesty to Athens. Thereupon, seeing the war whole, he took up the interrupted task, and wrote a second preface to explain the revisal of his plan (v. 26). Three of the last ten years had been covered finally, or in draft, when in the middle of a sentence the historian died. A fourth of his project was thus left undone, and it is clear that apart from the eighth book, a good deal of the remainder awaited a final revision. But this incompleteness of the work, though irreparable, is of value in disclos-

ing modes of working which its close perfection is apt to conceal.

The multiplication of written records has made much greater the difficulty of writing history, so that modern authors, where they do not fall into compilation, are apt to limit themselves to presenting single facets of a complex situation. Thucydides, in a simpler epoch, had the simpler aim, to provide a single and certain record in which the quality of some events, rather than a compass of all, imparted to his work the character of 'universal'. We do not think that the function of history can be more precisely defined than as 'the truth of what happened'; but the passages in which Thucydides outlines his principle are so familiar, that we may perhaps state it in some sentences of a recent writer, which are in the same key as the two prefaces in Thucydides (I, 21-2 and V, 26).

Mr. Herbert Read says of his journal of the retreat from St. Quentin in 1918: 'It is now seven years since the incidents here related took place, and six years since I wrote down this account. . . . My memory of the events associated with these relics was yet vivid enough to give them a real connection, and this I set myself to do. One thing I wished to avoid, and that was any personal interpretation of the events—any expatiation, that is to say, whether of the imagination, or the intellect. I wanted the events to speak for themselves unaided by any art.' Which is a just statement of Thucydides' own canon for narrative. *In Retreat* moves the reader by a revealing silence of which Thucydides was master, and it has a like flair for the *quality* of a detail; it is in a degree the *unit* of Thucydides, and it will serve as an exemplum whereby we may catch the intonation of feeling that runs through the Thucydidean narrative.

The fact in Thucydides strikes always its own note, and the rise and fall of feeling is thus determined by selection and by grouping. The intensity of the narrative,

and our emotional reaction thus vary with the magnitude of the events, or more strictly with those which moved Thucydides most. In the way of feeling the history presents a series of undulations as it passes from one action to another, and it is in this sense that *In Retreat* is the unit. Such undulations are the naval actions near Corcyra, the plague, the affair of Plataea, Pharmio's naval victories, and the revolt of Lesbos. Because of that elderly homily on the revolutionary spirit we would omit the Coreyrean sedition, but thereafter the undulations continue—the Aetolian expedition, the mutilation of the Hermæ, the sailing of the armada, rising to the great escarpment of the siege of Syrakuse and the retreat of Nikias and Demosthenes. All these are described with an austere devotion to reality which not only presents each incident as it happened (τὰ ἐργὰ τῶν πραχθέντων), but, besides that, sees it clear (τὸ σαφές τῶν γενομένων). The writer not only places an event in its context, but seizes its peculiar detail, so that the fact and its impression are presented at once. In the little fever of football one's nameless opponent is always the man with the odd stockings, or the wart on the nose; and in Thucydides' narrative of war, events specialise themselves in the same way, by their odd stocking or their wart. It is a method which, in history, requires intense *pathos* in the writer, and therefore the intense reserve which is its most effective expression. Literary values of this kind, which belong to writing rather than to language, may survive a translation, and here again it may be interesting to touch ancient with modern. *In Retreat*, the cogency of which depends largely on the quality of a detail, contains the following passages: (1) 'A match was being applied to the candle stuck on the bed-frame above my head.' (2) 'We saw one fellow come out of a door with a lady's reticule and other things.' (3) 'They (fleeing peasants) piled beds, chairs and innumerable bolsters on little carts, some hand-pulled,

some yoked to bony horses. They tied cows behind.' Now observe Thucydides: some Thracian mercenaries, let loose for destruction, sacked Mykalessos, a small town, 'and then was started no small tumult and every kind of destruction, and falling upon a boy's school they slaughtered them all, for the boys had just gone in' (VII, 28). Of the night when the Theban raiders entered Plataea we hear that 'only the gates by which they had entered were open, and these a Plataean fastened with the spike of a javelin which he thrust into the bar instead of a pin; so this exit too was cut off, and they were chased up and down the city. . . .' The Athenians fortifying Pylos, 'for want of hods, carried the mortar on their backs, stooping and clasping their hands behind them'. Such sentences in Thucydides may be quoted at liberty, and the character of his sustained writing comes through a translation in the following passage: 'The prisoners in the quarries were at first hardly treated by the Syracusans. They were in a low place and narrow, and having no roof to cover them; the heat of the sun, and the suffocating air tormented them during the day; and then the nights, which came on autumnal and chilly, made them ill by the violence of the change. Besides, for want of room, they did everything in the same place, and the bodies of those who died of their wounds, or the variation in the temperature, and such causes, were left heaped together one upon another, so that insufferable stench arose. And at the same time they were afflicted with hunger and thirst, for, during eight months, they were given each man daily half a pint of water and a pint of corn, and of all the ills that could befall men in such straits they suffered every one. During some seventy days they lived thus together, and then all except the Athenians, and any Siciliots, or Italiots, that had served with the expedition, were sold. Of all those who were taken it would be difficult to state the number exactly, but it could not have

been less than seven thousand. The action that thus befell was the greatest of all throughout the war, and in my opinion in Hellenic history, the most glorious to the victors, and to the defeated the most disastrous.' One or two passages, the account of the plague for instance, are strictly parallel to *In Retreat*, in being the transcript of a personal experience; but even where we have the digestion of a witness's account, there is always the certain image extracted from confusion; the historian saw the event as it were his own experience, and while sifting its veracity seized the symptom of its character. In which there is greater art, and greater danger, than in setting down the first impact of a unit of sensation. It is the difference between visualization and imagination.

But history implies something more than a tale of events; it is also apodeictic, and deals with causes and characters. Thucydides inherited a peculiar apparatus for judgment and criticism, which, though it belonged to a tradition of history that he did not endorse, was instantly appropriate both to his realism and to his detachment. The speeches of Herodotus, whether or not they have the flavour of good journalism, are inside a chronicle or a yarn; in Thucydides they are a kind of interlude which is neither pure 'reporting' nor pure oratory, nor pure criticism. Technically they are used to mark a crisis, or to divide the narrative into episodes, but in themselves they are *presented* in precisely the same way that events are presented. Criticism is implicit in them, just as emotion is implicit in the bare event; and by their means Thucydides allows his persons to explain causes or motives from this or that point of view, and to reveal their own characters just in so far as is relevant to the action. In this way the history of the war is made its own commentary, and external analysis is greatly reduced. A good instance of the method is the debate which took place in Syrakuse, at the approach of the Athenian fleet, where Thucydides, in

his own person, says nothing; and after the congress at Athens, his own summary only states what were in fact the deciding arguments. In one of the rare passages where he goes beyond this, and explains the causes of the war, it is only a guarded statement of his own opinion. Similarly there is no portrait painting, and Perikles, Kleon, Brasidas, Nikias, Archidamus, Alkibiades, Athenagoras, are sufficiently defined by their own utterances. Plutarch will tell you what some of them looked like, and lived like, but that is not relevant to what they did in the war.

Now this method, which properly belongs to literary art, is only valid for scientific history if we can affirm that the historian has transcribed verbatim a speech that was actually made; and this for Thucydides is not possible. The speeches may come near to the purport of what was said, they may, and often do, lead us to a view of this or that person which other authorities reinforce, but in effect they are a critique of character rather than a manifestation of it. That is because the historian's judgment is bound to intervene between the character and our conception of the speeches. The speeches of Alkibiades or Nikias do not *make* their characters, but are an expression of Thucydides' preconceived estimate. We have, in fact, only a complicated alternative to the rarer method of direct analysis which Thucydides employs in so masterly a fashion, for Themistokles and Antiphon. The speeches, therefore, are not the completion, but the collapse of the objective method, to which Thucydides had been by his own character committed, and leave the reader far more susceptible to the historian than do writers like Mommsen or Gibbon. No one realised more profoundly than Thucydides that history is inherently a series of approximations; but when he endeavoured to treat characters as he did events, he set himself a task too hard for either his detachment or his opportunity; and was thus betrayed into a subtler kind of falsity than would have been possible

in an estimate that was palpably his own. Of actions and sufferings he writes with an instinctive reverence for truth of fact—what he would call τὸ ἀναγκαϊότατον of accurate record, but on all the rest there is the mark of the sophist. Like Themistokles, of whose character he writes with such sympathetic precision, he had a mind that was first clear, then agile, then complicated; and yet it is impossible to read the history and doubt the integrity of his aim. The speeches, with their illusion of indifference, deceived none so much as Thucydides himself. The combination in one work of so strong a passion, and so calculated a detachment, is itself the strongest evidence of the writer's self-sophistication—a kind of puritan fallacy in letters, that to observe a regimen is to win salvation. When the regimen breaks down, as it does when Thucydides speaks of Kleon, and in lesser degree of Alkibiades (a really good general, but a flash young man), we are left with a comforting and clarifying partiality. There was behind every biassed silence, every lapse into honest prejudice, the passion for Athens which Thucydides feared lest it should corrupt him. It did, and yet one would hesitate on that account to set a lesser value on his work. Polybius had his devotion to the 'growth of institutions', Grote would show what a democratic 'culture' might do to perfect society. Tacitus, hating the emperors, wrote a vindictive pamphlet, and Voltaire, loving France, wrote the *Siècle* to her glory. Even Gibbon was too dazzled by his golden age to appreciate the worms that were bred in its decay. There is always a passion, because history, which is not an exact science, is always a personal experience of its writer. History, as it has been written, and as we understand it, endeavours, and from its nature must endeavour, to satisfy two masters, a truth of correspondence and a truth of art. Since all its 'events' begin by being the experiences of its persons, it cannot aspire to become an exact science till it invokes

psychology to define the 'differences of men's perceptions', of which Thucydides speaks. And, on the other hand, its obstacle as art is its function as science. But an historian's passion can give something that science cannot give, a distortion which may be a higher truth. That something is given in the *writing* of history, but partiality is the price that history pays for it. The dilemma never was more evident than in Thucydides, and one is inclined to the belief that his greater value lies in his narrative and belongs to literature.



# THE EXPERIENCE OF NEWMAN: REPLY TO FREDERIC MANNING

By RAMON FERNANDEZ

[*Translated by F. S. FLINT*]

IT is pleasant for a French critic to write for the cultivated public on the other side of the Channel. He is heard without prejudice. The echo of his ideas is perhaps less immediate, less startling, than with us, but he often meets with a surer and saner understanding. Singularly enough, when he puts forward invidious remarks on a difficult subject, he finds people to answer him who have meditated at length on this subject; miraculously enough, he finds that these answers are not well meaning advice on the art of exciting the curiosity of the reader, but objections formulated in silence and the isolation of thought, as though the critic were as ignorant as the author of the laws of literary propaganda. I am keenly grateful to Mr. Manning for the light he has thrown on the very complex problem of Newman's thought and for the criticisms he has made on my essay. He has all but converted me entirely to his views. Whenever I succeed in forming a just idea, I have a feeling of astonishment and even of uneasiness, and the slightest condemnation of my writings leaves in me a bitter after-taste of truth. All the more when it is a question of religion. I take part in these discussions with extreme circumspection and fear; I do not feel at home; a murmur or a sidelong glance is enough to make me want to decamp without drums or trumpets, as we say, with the humble smile of the tramp under a volley of barks.

But for humankind, to exist is to resist. Resistance is an instinct, a reason of being before being a reason. Just because I am a stranger to Catholicism, I would ask whether the thought of Newman would be so indispensable to me if it were not possible to detach it from Catholicism? I imagine that it would be impossible to feed for long on M. Maritain without sharing his ideas, nor on Marx without sharing his. Why then is it that I, who rarely open a devotional book and who am hardly at all interested in the evolution of dogmas, never let a year pass without re-reading long passages of *Sermons on Subjects of the Day* and the *Development of Christian Doctrine*? I can see no other reason for it than the possibility of utilising Newman either on the hither or the thither side of Catholicism. Mr. Manning knows that we in France are at the present moment undergoing an ordered offensive of Thomism, that is to say, Catholicism is recalling itself to us in its strictest and least equivocal form. M. Maritain would not find it hard to convince Newmanites that their position is untenable, just as M. Brémond once did not find it hard to drive our supple and subtle Cardinal in the direction of mysticism. I mean that, until things change,<sup>1</sup> the Catholicism of Newman is less important for us than his psychology of faith, just as the catastrophic socialism of Sorel is less important for us than his psychology of social action. And for the same reasons. Both were at grips with considerable difficulties, and both proceeded in a similar way: they shifted the centre of gravity of thought by balancing it no longer on the objective and logical connection of theory, but on the personal attitude and will of the thinker. I thought I was doing homage

<sup>1</sup> It is true that an approaching counter-offensive in the name of Saint Bonaventure is announced. The inner life, the relations of the individual and faith, the Augustine tradition, will resume their rights. And Newman may perhaps be called upon to play an important part in this battle. But that is still in the future.

to the memory of Newman and a service to general culture when I related the author of the *Grammar of Assent* to the boldest and most original thinkers of our time. A kinship otherwise recognised, since Sorel never quotes Newman without adding to his name the title of great or illustrious philosopher. Was I wrong? Here there is a change of ground: we are no longer concerned merely with the subject-matter but also with the method of which my essay is an application.

If I understand Mr. Manning rightly, he reproaches me with having interpreted Newman too freely by substituting a fanciful ideology, which betrays my author, for the historical criticism which alone is legitimate in the occasion. For example, he states that, with regard to antecedent probabilities, I should have mentioned the influence of Locke instead of dragging in M. Bergson. He adds that I did this because my mind was full of the ideas of Bergson. If the reader expected from me the placing of Newman in his historical setting, what we call in France a 'leçon d'aggrégation', then Mr. Manning is a thousand times right. I have jumbled the cards, mixed up the *genres*—and, worse, I have deserved the thunders of our friend, T. S. Eliot, who has vigorously denounced the false criticism which expends in dubious analysis the creative powers for which it can find no use.

Yet I thought that there did exist a literary *genre*, much honoured in England, which is half-way between history and philosophy and which is called the 'essay', for the very purpose of distinguishing it from criticism. The aim of the essay is not so much to paint the physical and moral portrait of a great man, as to interpret his thought, to relate it to a body of ideas existing independently of it. To say that Napoleon's thoughts turned to Alexander and that Mussolini's turn to Napoleon, is to make a historical remark; to say that in Napoleon there is something of Alexander and of Mussolini, is to begin to take some

liberty with history; but it would be a greater liberty to study the evolution of the idea of conquest from Alexander to Mussolini, because it would be necessary to go outside the domain of facts, or at least to link them up with ideas which are always disputable, because they would emerge fully armed from the brain of the author. Philosophy takes these liberties, as also does the essay, but more modestly, and without aspiring to the severity of proof. Now, if it is legitimate to interpret an author from a standpoint outside him—not of course without offering guarantees of impartiality and good faith—I must call attention to two points: (1) the ideas that interest the essayist are clearly living ideas which are current or about to be current at the time when he is writing; (2) the tendencies which these ideas represent, if their track can be traced along the path of history, are of course clearer, more appreciable and better defined once they have been revealed to the philosophic consciousness and have become the subject of open discussion. It follows from this that the essayist will prefer explaining the past by the present to explaining it by a past more distant still, and he will underline, in the consciousness or unconsciousness of the author he is studying, the moral, intellectual or physical characteristics which correspond in time to the problems of the present which are troubling him. His criticism will be prospective, it will bring forward new values which are the result of a collaboration between the author and himself, or rather between two moments in the human consciousness. I am not unaware of the dangers of this method, but, with the exception of the proposition 'A is A', was not every judgment in the beginning a risk and a challenge of the mind? The history of philosophy has been made by men who understood each other but ill. Our informational requirements are more rigorous to-day; but must we for that reason give up the attempt to keep a great spirit beyond death in touch with living thought,

which is a way of assuring ourselves of his immortality? I do not think so.

'Now,' writes Mr. Manning, 'we may take over Newman's principles to apply them in conditions of which he was unaware, and with an intention of which he was innocent, as though we are only extending his personal influence and producing the logical consequences of his thought, but he is not implicated in the matter, and our historical conscience should prevent us from attributing to him, or from assuming even that he might possibly have accepted the conclusions to which his principles lead us, when we apply them in our own changed and entirely new relation.' This passage contains two criticisms very different in nature and scope. That Newman would not have accepted my conclusions is certain, and I cannot see that a single line in my essay makes it appear that I thought he would. But it seems to me that Mr. Manning is strangely narrowing down not only the essay, but positive criticism as well, if he reduces the latter to defining and commenting on what an author thinks about himself. On the other hand, it seems to me that the historical conscience will be in no way injured by a work which makes no historical pretensions and is openly presented as without historical pretensions. Georges Sorel was fond of quoting Newman with a purpose closely akin to that which made him extol certain passages in M. Bergson. On the strength of this precedent, I thought I could bring into relation two minds that both strove to extend thought beyond the concept. The same applies to my distinction between mystical experience and religious experience. In making this distinction, I followed M. Brémond, who is our best psychologist of mysticism. Sir James Stephen, in the letter quoted by Mr. Manning, seems to me to take the word 'mystical' in its current and popular sense, which denotes rather an affective attitude than a well defined experience *sui generis*. Mr. Manning

sees only differences of degree between these experiences; very good, but a difference of degree may involve a difference of attitude, and this is so for Newman. I may indicate this difference, or this shade of difference, by pointing out that, contrary to the rationalist and the mystic, Newman, before God and before Reason, declares himself responsible for his faith. It is this responsibility, this necessity which he felt to acknowledge his personal differences, this heroism of faith, that I admire in Newman. Is it a betrayal of the 'historical conscience' to claim that this heroism is independent of any particular creed, and to offer it as an example to the men of our time who live the life of the mind?

I grant Mr. Manning that it is the Newman inspired by Coleridge I invoked. My essay is thus incomplete. I recognise this and add that such was my intention. But is it partial? I must dispute this point, for I think that Mr. Manning is in his turn distorting my thought, when he says that I have metamorphosed Newman into Nietzsche. So far was I from intending this that I feel I must have expressed myself very badly on this point. I will try to restate my view as briefly as possible.

When we read Newman we are struck to find him considering the religious life as a personal illustration of theological thought. We know that for him the moral conscience is the perception of the authority and justice of God, confused at first, then defined and fixed by Catholic dogma, tradition and imagery. The real assent is to images formed by the imagination, which, in the believer, are as vivid as visible objects perceived by the eye. Thus Newman was led to distinguish between theological truth and 'the fact or religious reality'. 'The notion and the reality assented to are represented by one and the same proposition, but serve as distinct interpretations of it'.<sup>1</sup> But what is the relation of the reality to the notion?

<sup>1</sup> *Grammar of Assent*, p. 119.

'Knowledge must ever precede the exercise of the affections. . . . Devotion must have its objects; those objects, as being supernatural, when not presented to our senses by material symbols, must be set before the mind in propositions. The formula, which embodies a dogma for the theologian, readily suggests an object for the worshipper.'<sup>1</sup> The counterpart of the real assent is the total character of the non-formal inference, of the living reasoning. 'The mind is unequal to a complete analysis of the motions which carry it on to a particular conclusion, and is swayed and determined by a body of proofs, which it recognises only as a body, and not in its constituent parts.'<sup>2</sup> And here we have again the *leit-motiv* of Newman: 'It follows that what to one intellect is proof is not so to another, and that the certainty of a proposition does properly consist in the certitude of the mind that contemplates it.'<sup>3</sup> Because all the steps of concrete thought tend towards the real assent. 'As I have already said, arguments about the abstract cannot handle and determine the concrete. They may approximate to a proof, but they can only reach the probable, because they cannot reach the particular.'<sup>4</sup>

Supported by these passages, I submit to Mr. Manning the following observations which seem to me important. In the first place, it appears that the originality of Newman among religious thinkers lies in his reserving and defining, in face of theology, of dogmatic creed, the modes of living thought, of personal certainty, which in no way coincide with rational logic and certainty. It is true that he bases his personal certainty on the dogmatic proposition, but since he distinguished between the two, since he set a space between the dogma and the believer, since certainty is an act of the believer and not an evidence of the dogma, one is apt to think that a believer in another creed, without modifying in the least Newman's way of being certain,

<sup>1</sup> *Id.*, pp. 120-121.    <sup>2</sup> *Id.*, p. 292.    <sup>3</sup> *Id.*, p. 293.    <sup>4</sup> *Id.*, p. 278.

might give quite another object to his certainty. Newman is certain of the truth of Catholicism, but he is certain because he is Newman. On the one hand we have a question of fact: the Catholicism of Newman; on the other a question of right: is Newman right in defining and justifying his faith as he does? If he is right, as I believe he is, his Catholicism passes into the background, and his analyses are valid for all belief. I would even add that they imply a multiplicity of beliefs. Directly we detach the premises and conclusions of an argument from the logical chain in order to incorporate them in the intimate nature of the man who thinks, his personal reactions, in short, his idiosyncrasy, we are led, almost inevitably, to a pluralist view which is incompatible with Catholic monism.<sup>1</sup> Further, from the moment you see in the assent, in the certitude, personal acts bearing on concrete individual visions, they must be inventions, they must increase our spiritual possessions, if they are to add to thought and at the same time realise it. In these conditions Catholic realism, with its doctrine analysed down to its most delicate relationships, with its fixed imagery, reduces the value and scope of this concrete thought so admirably defined by Newman, and makes of it a secondary function of abstract thought and of memory. That is the reason for my claiming that the fideism of Newman, if it is to be truly coherent, autonomous and positive, must imply that the believer creates the object of his belief. I will return to this point later on. To sum up, these reflections lead us to ask ourselves whether Catholicism is compatible with thought; and the fact that Newman was not a philosopher, but, as he has said himself, a 'rhetorician', explains clearly enough how he was able to refrain from following his thought into all its consequences.

If when reading Newman, seduced by his incomparable

<sup>1</sup> On this incompatibility see the penetrating observations of Sorel in *De l'Utilité du Pragmatisme*.



music, we wish to remain in sympathy with him, we must often, if I may use the phrase, close the eyes of the intelligence. I take an example from the passage on Montaigne and Pascal to which Mr. Manning refers. 'Here,' writes Newman, 'are two celebrated writers in direct opposition to each other in their fundamental view of truth and duty. Shall we say that there is no such thing as truth and error, but that anything is truth to a man which he troweth? and not rather, as the solution of a great mystery, that truth there is and attainable it is, but that its rays stream in upon us through the medium of our moral as well as our intellectual being; and that in consequence that perception of its first principles which is natural to us is enfeebled, obstructed, perverted by allurements of sense and the supremacy of self, and, on the other hand, quickened by aspirations after the supernatural; so that at length two characters of mind are brought out into shape, and two standards and systems of thought—each logical, when analysed, yet contradictory of each other, and only not antagonistic because they have no common ground on which they can conflict?'<sup>8</sup>

These views can very well be interpreted in a pragmatic sense, if we deduce from them the theory of temperaments formulated by William James; or in a strictly monist sense provided that dialectic has first produced metaphysical evidence *sui generis*; but is it possible to reconcile personal certitude with a truth in itself which only certain temperaments can perceive? It is clear that the whole problem lies in that. If 'the certainty of a proposition does properly consist in the certitude of the mind which contemplates it', does not this mean that the individual is, so to speak, responsible for the truth which he pursues; for is it not he who puts it up for quotation on the market, gives it consistency and importance? 'Thou wouldst not seek for me. . . .' The reflections of Newman suggest

<sup>8</sup> *Grammar of Assent*, pp. 311-312.

the idea that a thinker is a lyrist of the intelligence who expresses his temperament by harmonies of notions as the poet expresses his by harmonies of words. The essential thing is the temperament, the intimate coherence, the fact that beneath all the superimposed strata of reasoning, the man is revealed naked and intact. Why deny it? The only proof of the superiority of Pascal over Montaigne, which might convince us, would have to be a universal, objective proof, independent of temperament and of the personality of this or that thinker. For me to be able to affirm that the nature of Paul prevents him from perceiving a truth that is luminous to Peter, it is necessary that this truth should be determinable without the aid of Peter or Paul, and yet by means which both Peter and Paul could employ. But, says Newman, the process of reasoning does not lead us to the concrete reality, the object of the belief of Peter which Paul denies. Very good, but now we are back again, as Newman himself recognised, at attitudes, individual and incommunicable, and consequently incomparable with one another, and we have no right to say that Peter sees further than Paul.

We shall leave the vicious circle, if, instead of thinking that the ideas of Pascal and Montaigne are 'perceptions' of reality, we hold them to be created values, just as the visions of Shakespeare are, for example, though of another nature. I am not speaking of their *observations*—which indeed are strangely alike—but of the way in which they interpret these, of the atmosphere in which they bathe them. The scepticism of Montaigne is a general hypothesis in which he frames his representation of humanity, and the latter is neither less complete nor less noble than that of Pascal. These frames being, with Montaigne as with Pascal, values which are peculiar to them, and as it were the spiritual flowers of their nature, it would be absurd to assert that Montaigne does not see so far as Pascal or that his sight is distorted, *for both create what they see*, and,

when every allowance is made, it is Montaigne of the two who creates the less.

Perhaps Mr. Manning will allow me to make a comparison: to-day we are all more or less novel readers and some of us are novel writers; we can distinguish quite clearly between the imagination of the novel writer and that of the reader, though the latter may be as vivid and as fertile in joy as the former. The novel writer, in striking against things, makes images gush out, new visions which he embodies, by the grace of expression, in the concrete experience of humanity. I do not mean that the reader of novels cannot imagine on his own account and in his own way; I mean simply this, that his imagination is enveloped in that of the novelist, that it takes life and subsistence therefrom, that the images which arise in the reader are variations on a theme which is imposed on him. Newman is this reader, a reader of the novel of God, who derives his nourishment from the images which dogma and tradition suggest to him.<sup>1</sup> The marvellous way in which he takes consciousness of himself shows us his limits, and makes us regret that this fine novelist of the soul never broke through the narrow mould of the reader.

But Mr. Manning must not conclude that I wish to make of Newman some sort of wizard found wanting! What I have said of the novelist, might be applied to the learned inventor as opposed to the learned 'reader', to the man who makes history as opposed to the historian. Every individual who creates values, who adds something to the world in which he is born, uses at the beginning

<sup>1</sup> Here we rediscover the reader of Walter Scott. By his care in determining and depicting the concrete individual, by the importance which he attaches to the adhesion of the senses to images, Newman shows himself as a reader of novels, and it is doubtless from these reader's impressions that he partly drew his ideas on concrete knowledge.

of his researches and before he submits them to objective control, the mode of thought which Newman describes under the name of faith. I think that a rational criterion of certitude does exist, but this criterion works only in a very limited number of cases, and for the greater part of the time in the varied circumstances of our life, it is the personal criterion which counts. Newman has marvellously well defined the thought of man in action, the real assent by which we adhere to images which communicate to us their coherence and their permanence, the personal certitude that attaches to acts which must be accomplished in order that something may be realised, and not to the objective value of these acts when accomplished. Newman, who has himself created values, values of consciousness, values of style, by an act of faith in revealed truth and the Catholic Church, has made himself the reader and stager of a universe inaccessible to experience and to reason. Whatever we think of his limits, whether we consider them fertile or barren, we must bow before this mind which could pass beyond its own type by becoming conscious of it.

Perhaps Mr. Manning will believe me now when I assure him that I never dreamed of a metamorphosis of Newman into Nietzsche. Besides I believed that I had expressed myself sufficiently clearly on this point. In contrasting Newman with Kant, I wrote: 'For Newman, on the contrary, it is the concrete qualified individual who is the pivot of moral knowledge, and his individualism more nearly resembles, *mutatis mutandis*, that of Nietzsche than that of Kant. But in spite of the isolation of moral knowledge, Newman's thought is turned towards the idea of communion. In barbarous terms: it tends towards an ideal coincidence of the instinct of knowledge and of the instinct of individualisation. In this way, Newman is more modern, not only than Kant, but than Nietzsche himself.' It will be seen from this passage that I compare

Newman and Nietzsche in so far as they are opposed to Kant, and that I afterwards oppose them because they follow diverging roads. 'Communion makes common,' said Nietzsche; for Newman communion raises man above his ordinary level; but while with Kant rationalist communion is determined automatically and externally to the concrete individual, with Newman it is at once the direction and the aim of the effort of this individual in isolation from other men, when he personally affirms his certitude. If Mr. Manning will recall the most recent work on the sciences, on art, on personality, he will see that this conception which is everywhere present or at least foreshadowed in the writings of our thinkers, marks a considerable advance both on the rationalism of Kant and on the anarchical revolt of the nineteenth century. We are entering the age of personality. The superman of Nietzsche is a false personality, because for him the creation of values is a free gift immediately withdrawn because he fears communion, that is to say, he fears to engage himself and therefore to affirm his claims. The believer of Newman is a true personality because he isolates himself from men only in order to rejoin them more quickly and to unite himself with them more intimately. With this said, Mr. Manning will excuse me if I do not follow him in his Hegelian commentary: for me Hegelianism, like a certain profession less noble than philosophy, leads to everything provided you get out of it.

To sum up: I consider Newman as one of our masters because he does not stop at the logical structure of a doctrine, but pushes it to the human residue, to the personal attitude which this doctrine conceals. He came forward and discovered himself, and therefore he is nearer to us than Mr. Russell or Mr. Bradley, or even than M. Bergson. By substituting for rationalist or theological dialectic, a psychology marvellously bound up with the believer, he escapes, as I said, the criticism of Pareto, that rules our

thoughts, and is enrolled among the pioneers of that philosophy which Hulme has traced in its broad outlines in his remarkable *Speculations*. When Mr. Manning tells me that 'the notion that "belief adds to cognition, passes beyond experience, invents, creates"', is only true in the sense that it is true of music, poetry and of the arts generally,' I cannot help thinking that he is substituting the narrowest and most sterile rationalism for the true life of the mind. But this would carry us too far. The Catholics may legitimately count Newman as one of themselves and not one of the least. Nevertheless, those of us who, though not Catholics or even Christians, yet think that faith is indispensable to humanity, that it is a necessary mode of thought and action, often more timely than reason, if only because it is the first condition and primal form of the reasonable life, may say of Newman, without betraying him, what Marlowe said of Lord Jim: 'He is one of us.'

# CAPITAINE ENSORCELEUR

*By* ORLO WILLIAMS

**B**ETWEEN March 1915, and March 1918, Captain Bancroft's wife saw her husband for thirty-four days—two periods of leave from Egypt. During these brief sunbursts their two hearts stood still with happiness, and they grudged the flight of each day that brought them nearer the racking convulsion of parting. When that convulsion was over the beating of their hearts slowly returned to a sullen normality. This was the agony of war to human vessels whom it caught well out on a fair course: what should have been normal existence became an almost unbearable rapture, and only in unnatural separation did their life take an even rhythm. Miles Bancroft wrote long and fully to his wife and she to him: but the longest and fullest letters are but skimpy samples of the days they represent, and it was not strange if Mrs. Bancroft, in those dull, wearing, falsely normal days, sometimes wondered how women affected her absent husband. There had been none in the Dardanelles, of course, but she had heard of them in his letters from Cairo, Alexandria, Port Said, and even Ismailia. In periods of relaxation he had played tennis with one and danced with another, English, French, Greek, and Italian. With all intention to allow a pardonable latitude she was, she did not deny it, glad that he seemed to take so little interest in them. He wrote about them in such a reassuringly perfunctory way, that his oral professions of faithfulness—which she found herself exacting against her own deliberate intentions—were accepted literally. They deserved this whole-hearted acceptance. It was only for

his wife that Captain Bancroft hungered. In a mood of unbearable longing he once wrote a poem to her in blank verse, as he grilled under a tent in the desert. It was the only poem he ever wrote, and a submarine sent it to the bottom of the sea, so that Mrs. Bancroft was saved from the dubious pleasure of commenting on it. In calmer moods he wrote amusing letters, the middle sheets of which were suitable for handing round. In fact, his collected letters were a very full record of his temporary existence as an officer on the staff. Only one or two incidents were omitted, as requiring a delicacy of direct narration to do them justice. Captain Bancroft quite intended to tell his wife about Louise, but a splinter of Turkish shell from the direction of Gaza interfered with this, among many other intentions. He was hardly himself again till the war was over, by which time her image was too thin to be worth evoking. Besides, he was already back in normal domesticity. So he smiled privately, and tore a page out of his diary.

It was a page that reminded him of many half forgotten things, though the extremity of pain with which he had torn himself from his wife within a few days of Christmas could never be forgotten. He saw them both, at the end of that second leave, driving in a taxi through Knightsbridge, numb with misery on a dull December morning. He had almost envied the young and dashing bound by no intimate bonds to be so excruciatingly severed. He saw again the dreary spectacle of the leave train platform at Charing Cross—a dirge of khaki and kitbags with notes of scarlet and a glint of gold lace. The few women were all mourners, and the men, except for some officers of G.H.Q. France, who looked as if they made the journey often, had the air of undertakers conducting their own obsequies, decently but dolefully, and slightly deprecating, as all good undertakers do, the presence of any unprofessional mourners at all. The good-byes were furtive,



mere ghosts of what had gone before, and khaki entered its movable coffin. The mourners still hung about bravely, stonily, and the buried ones who had no mourners made way at windows for those who had.

The whistle blew, the coffin moved: in a moment a few feet of distance became a thousand miles. The women in their dark clothes looked all alike. They stood drooping. 'He's gone' was the one thought carved in their tearless faces: and the men, mourned or unmourned, felt raw to their very marrows. Miles Bancroft had a gunner captain opposite, in an otherwise empty carriage. 'It's pretty awful going back,' said the gunner captain. 'Yes, frightful,' he had answered. Whereafter, having acknowledged utter nakedness, they retired into opposite corners of the carriage to grow that old, hard skin of service. For those serving in France that old hard skin had to be grown quickly, but one had longer time to nurse one's tenderness going Eastwards. The chance contacts of a crowded Channel crossing were but mildly astringent. One watched the officers of the Western front assuming horny carapaces in a moment, and crowded Boulogne was like a vast, strange school where one had intruded, without invitation, on the forced gaieties of an opening term.

As Miles Bancroft read the brief jottings of that voyage he heard the dismal creaking of his wicker armchair at the officers' club, where he had sat reading a dilapidated *Tatler*, a week old, and felt again the devastating sense of loneliness in a crowd. The troubled sleep and indigestion—for emotion always went to his stomach—the nipping, misty air of Boulogne next morning, the Paris train crammed to the brim at starting, but thinning, thinning all the way as it jolted slowly behind the lines of communication, the handful of British uniforms respectfully but suspiciously welcomed by a military policeman at the Gare du Nord, the more kindly corporal at the Gare de Lyon, and the flash of sun that, later, illumined the Tuileries

Gardens—all came back to him. That half day in Paris where he had always felt romantic, gay and greedy, had been the first anodyne. Even sorrowing, he was unable to resist that spell, or the exhilarating effects of *vin rosé* ice cold in a *carafe*, at a familiar restaurant near the Madeleine. Still alone, smoking a cigar, he passed the afternoon in unreflective wandering on a well-known course—the old Rue des Francs Bourgeois, the exquisite Place des Vosges, the Quais, the Luxembourg Gardens where with Roger Merry he had collapsed in laughter after lunch at Marguéry's. Old Marguéry was then alive, but he had died since: and so had Roger Merry not long ago at Suvla Bay. Tired and listless, Miles Bancroft had dined early and feebly at the Gare de Lyon. He had a sleeping compartment to himself on the Marseilles express. Not a soul that he knew was on board, and he slept fitfully through the night wrapped once more, in desolation. He had dreamed, he remembered, of hurrying along endless platforms with his wife seeking desperately a train for Norway. In his haste he had outrun her, and, as he was carried away alone, a long shrill wail, Ethel's, had frozen his heart. . . . Only the French engine crying like a mournful owl in the night.

The day of arrival at Marseilles had been, as the diary reminded him, a nightmare. To begin with, his valise had not arrived by the express—a deplorable fact which sent him to fume and gesticulate in the *chef de gare* office, and which meant the possibility of being sent on to Egypt without it. If so, Heaven only knew if he would see again his field boots and new suits of khaki drill. However, wires were despatched to Paris, and he turned to the next business—the usual visit to the Base Commandant's office. It is a rule of the army that prophets are prophets in no country but their own. Miles Bancroft could have walked with assurance into any base office that disfigured the Nile Delta, but in Marseilles he was only

a wandering case for embarkation. After a drive in a rattling tram, he had stumbled up creaking wooden stairs in a bye-street. Base offices were all alike—the Provost Marshal's book, the notice-board, the orderlies, who looked as if they slept in uniform, the click of typewriters in a musty air, and British officers who regarded one with intense aversion. The young D.A.Q.M.G. who saw him was short and snappy, regretted the non-arrival of the valise very perfunctorily, and told him to embark on an empty transport that afternoon. Protest was vain, and he had not attempted it, but gloomily got on board his tram again and rattled up the hill to the station.

The *chef de gare* had no news for him, but assured him that the valise would arrive that night. He had to be on board by five, and the ship, of course, would leave at dawn. He had walked back to the Base Commandant's office to stretch his legs with the idea of bribing the quartermaster to take some interest in the valise. The quartermaster, a very fat man perspiring over files, had been dense and patronising, but accepted money. Leaving a haversack and a despatch case to be called for later, Miles Bancroft had drifted out, raging, into the streets of Marseilles. The sun was shining but it had not cheered him: the wind had blown dust in his eyes. The famous Cannebière had reminded him of nothing but the Edgware Road, and the quays had seemed lifeless and smelly. He had climbed drearily to the top of Notre Dame de la Garde, and drearily down again. Hoping to get at least some culinary delight out of Marseilles, he had sat down to a solitary *déjeuner* on a balcony overlooking the inner harbour. Bouillabaisse came, and a bottle of white wine from Cassis. He had eaten the bouillabaisse mournfully but greedily, hoping for pleasure, fearing indigestion. Indigestion had come, not pleasure: he had tried to walk it off on the glaring road that led to the coast, but he had wearied of walking between high stone walls long before

a glimpse of the coast appeared. Hot and with a headache he had returned to the base office, collected his belongings and found a shabby horse-cab which drove him an interminable distance over *pavé* and through squalor to Mole C, where his transport lay. She was a large and dirty liner, high out of the water. There were no troops on board, no cargo was visible, and the ship seemed deserted. The mate told him that she was returning empty to Alexandria, a few more officers might turn up, and dinner was at six. Bancroft retired to his cabin, depressed as a moulting bird, and looked out of his port hole at the scum upon the grimy waters.

Three more officers arrived. Two were waifs of the Salonica Force, one only was bound for Egypt. He knew none of them. There had been a superficial heartiness at meeting, and a desultory conversation at the Captain's table, which provided the usual ship's dinner: thin soup of untraceable flavour, then fish, meat and fruit all but lately thawed to a state of luke-warm tastelessness. After this meal they had retired to the first-class smoking-room, where they smoked pipes moodily in armchairs. They were in no hurry to exhaust all subjects of mutual conversation before the ship started, and at the steward's invitation they fell upon the thin mental provender of the ship's library. The first officer came in to say that orders had just been received that the ship would not sail the following day. Submarines, of course. Interest in the news was languid. Miles Bancroft saw that he would have to toil after his valise himself, and the prospect of getting it seemed a slight alleviation. However, he could now write a long letter and catch a post. Taking out his fountain pen he gave Mrs. Bancroft the full benefit of his weariness and jangled nerves which produced, before his narrative of facts, an affectionate outpouring of mingled devotion and wretchedness which she had found at once comforting and disturbing. She did not consider how

that letter came to be posted in Marseilles. Her husband posted it next morning, when, having rescued his valise, he set out gaily with his fellow Egyptian waif to lunch at the Hotel Bristol.

It had seemed, he remembered, a jolly morning. The sun had cheered him, the breeze refreshed him, and he had felt ready to enjoy himself. The profound truth, pithily expressed *en passant* by Aristotle in his *Ethics*—that nobody can keep up an activity indefinitely—was the only excuse that he could find for his change of mood. The war was still being waged, his home was far away, and he was horribly uprooted; but a healthy being cannot stay in the dumps for ever. The dumps had made his letter lyrical overnight, and they had worn themselves out. They had to retire and recuperate, leaving their place free to good spirits. Looking back on the whole of his war experiences Miles Bancroft could count just a few days of this kind, one or two a year, when in spite of everything he had felt gay and irresponsible. He was a British officer free of Marseilles on a sunny morning, without attachments and without duties; he was well dressed and his Sam Browne glistened: the thought amused him and forced upon him the mood of a mayfly—to live for the moment, letting the past and future go hang.

His fellow-waif, an amiable Sapper called Bowker, was a youth of few ideas and limited culture; but the prospect of his companionship for such a day had not been damping. At these rare moments one took an amiable being amiably. They had wandered along the quays laughing and tapping their boots with their canes, drunk Madeira at a café and wandered up into the public gardens. They had come back to the Cannebière fiercely ready for the best that Marseilles could offer in the way of *déjeuner*. Determined to make no mistake this time, Bancroft had gone straight for the Bristol, and Bowker drifted in behind him like a comfortable barge in tow. The restaurant was full of

portly and animated Marseillais in tight black coats, and there were officers of many nations, French, American, Serbian, Belgian and British; but a table was found for them in what was properly the *café*. Seated on the bench with the backs to the wall they had a good view of the lively scene while they did justice to a perfectly cooked *entrecôte* and a bottle of heady but reviving Châteauneuf.

The two British officers had been isolated at first from the rest of the community by empty tables on either side of them, and the naturally roving eye of the male had been disappointed of alighting upon any charms displayed by an attractive woman. It was not till they had disposed of the *entrecôte* and were proceeding to cheese that the table on their left was occupied by two women. They sat upon the bench that went along the wall, and Miles Bancroft could only catch glimpses of them behind Bowker's shoulders, but the glimpses were enough to tell him that one of the women was pretty, the other insignificant, and that the disposition of the pair admitted of small doubt. The pretty one was tall and slim, with hair of a *blond cendré*, grey eyes of infinite gaiety, and a complexion of discreet natural rosiness. There was no obvious *maquillage*, no violent pencillings or excessive reddenings. She was quietly and elegantly dressed, and her movements had an easy distinction. Her companion was obviously only an appendage, the merest camouflage of respectability.

'Do you think they are ladies?' Bowker had asked innocently.

'Hunting in pairs,' he had answered with an ironical smile, which the fair one looking round had surprised upon his lips. Bowker, dear lad, had blushed slightly, and looked rigidly in front of him: he was not a prude but shy of advances in public.

The two women kept up an animated babble punctuated with mirth. Bancroft fancied that this was all a performance for the benefit of *les Anglais*; he almost saw the

French phrases, 'gaîté folle' and 'rire pétillant', consecrated by French novelists to such episodes. He was in no mood to snap at such an obvious bait, yet he could not help observing the blonde out of the corner of his eye. She seemed to have a spontaneous vivacity of the Gallic type which he much appreciated: he guessed that in her society one might be amused by something better than the usual dull chatter of the *cocotte*.

The amiable Bowker knew no French, it appeared, yet even he became at length aware of radiations from the adjoining table. The ladies were paying the bill for a not very extensive meal.

'They're giving us the glad eye,' he whispered importantly.

'About the only thing they'll *give* you: you'll pay for anything else,' Bancroft had returned. He had no intention of paying for anything that the owners of the *rire pétillant* would expect him to pay for. Yet the blonde had seemed to have possibilities, if she could be made to understand that he would pay for merry, impersonal companionship, for laughter and badinage during a light-hearted afternoon—if she could only forget the other thing. But the other thing, after all, was her trade, and he decided against asking for what was not in the shop-window. Chance, however, rejected his decision. An Englishman, clearly a native of Marseilles, came into the restaurant. The fair ones had greeted him volubly as an old acquaintance, asked after his son, and pursued him with agreeable salutations. He sat down at the empty table on Bancroft's right hand. The ladies had their opportunity, and made the most of it by continuing volubilities across the two British officers. So awkward a situation had to be adjusted. The Englishman, in an embarrassed way, mumbled to Bancroft that he was very sorry and couldn't help it but must introduce them. He did so promptly. Their names were Louise and Amélie:

Amélie was the appendage. The consular gentleman gained perfect peace immediately, and as for the two officers, they were in for it.

Bancroft had enough French and good manners to cope gracefully with the situation. He had responded gallantly to warm salutations and pushed the open-mouthed Bowker into a chair at the enchantress' table. It was a question of coffee and liqueurs to begin with, of course, and then came the question of developments. Bowker remained an amiable barge throughout, uttering hardly a word and understanding few. He and Amélie just paired as appendages, leaving the field to Louise and the *capitaine anglais* who had paid homage to beauty. Miles Bancroft, warmed by his Châteauneuf, had at once taken his line—that of challenging the blonde to batter her hardest at a citadel of irony. So long as she tried to tempt him with the shop window, he would laugh at her, and turn her invitations to ridicule. He might drive her at last, he had hoped, to amuse him only as he wanted to be amused.

The ladies had lost no time in proclaiming that they were at the gentlemen's disposal. There were taxis: a promenade along the Corniche would be delightful. Bancroft had uncovered his defences in replying:

‘Je me promène volontiers, mais je ne marche pas.’

Louise professed to understand, and yet the shallowness of her understanding had come to him as a shock: for she returned blindly to the charge a moment later. For some chaffing compliment he had thanked her with mock seriousness ‘du fond de mon coeur.’

‘Du fond de la culotte, plutôt,’ had been her reply. It pronounced her case well-nigh hopeless, to his profound disappointment.

They had driven in a taxi along the Corniche: the afternoon had turned bleak and grey, with little beauty in sky or sea. The artless assaults of Louise, who sat next him opposite the two appendages, had broken against



his derision as ceaselessly and vainly as the waves on the rocks. She was as tireless as the sea. Accepting his own obduracy provisionally, she had turned her batteries on the amiable Bowker, who had giggled like a nervous schoolgirl offered a glass of sherry by a facetious uncle. Louise affected to believe that Bancroft was keeping his companion's natural ardours under control by moral suasion, and the argument on this subject lasted half an hour. In vain he tried to tap the springs of her natural gaiety, asking her questions about the life of Marseilles, about her lovers, about officers of other nations. Her conversational cupboard was as bare as Mother Hubbard's: not a crumb in it.

'I bet you have a lively time at Marseilles.'

'Oh no, it is *triste* at Marseilles now.'

'Yes, it is *triste*,' came as an echo from Amélie.

'But a pretty woman has plenty of *amants*, come.'

'Pas tant que ça.'

'En effet,' sententiously from the appendage.

'What do you think of the Americans?'

'I like the Americans very much.'

'Yes, very much': again the echo.

Then a fresh assault of smiles, glances and incitements now veiled, now appallingly frank, would begin. She had the application of a commercial traveller, and something of a bagman's thickness of skin. Bancroft met her resolutely with as many French variations of 'nothing doing' as he could think of; without in the least upsetting her equanimity. The drive ended inevitably in a tea-shop, where Bancroft noted it as typical of a non-tea-drinking nation that Louise and Amélie seemed quite unmoved by the appearance of tea and cakes, which they hardly touched. About this time there were long stretches of silence, while the two officers munched *éclairs*. The appendage powdered her nose, and even Louise flagged. She gave out that the next stage was the Bodega, but

thither Bancroft was determined not to accompany her. To sit on stools in a public bar and sip cocktails was not his idea of entertainment, yet even in rising to say good-bye to her he knew that, had she said but three sentences in keeping with the racy comedy of her features, he would not have deserted. As it was, they had pleaded letters to write, and went to play a game of billiards. It seemed as if the episode was over with the rather formal farewells that took place outside the teashop. And so it would have been, had not the cooking of the Hotel Bristol been so excellent. Bancroft cherished visions of an artistic dinner, and towed Bowker thither in search of it. The hors d'œuvres and sole had exhibited æsthetic qualities wholly lost on Bowker but gratifying to Bancroft, and both were contemplating an exquisite *tournedos* when the entrance of Louise and Amélie suspended their forks in mid-air.

Miles Bancroft had somehow known that the women would track them down, though he wondered that they found such a meagre prey worth hunting. He hoped they would find other quarry, but the looks of delighted recognition assumed by Louise confirmed him in the supposition that they had drawn the Bodega blank. He felt more than ironical: he felt cruel. If they were going to cadge a meal, they should pay for it. He would be stolid and British, not gallant and French. He gave them a chilly 'Hullo, here you are again' and offered nothing. He would see to what lengths of humiliation they would go. Louise had no reserves: she went to the point at once.

'It would be only amiable to offer us a little dinner,' she said in a coaxing tone. 'Just anything, only a mouthful, whatever you are having.'

'Just anything you are having,' from the appendage.

'Oh well,' he had said in English to Bowker, 'we're in for it again. We can't drive them away.' Down they sat, and Bancroft without consulting their wishes ordered

them *tournedos*. Conversation was again a duel between him and Louise: but he was out to wound her this time. Could anything pierce that skin? She asked him when he would return to Marseilles.

'Who knows?' he had replied. 'I am sure you will run me to ground when I arrive.'

'Ah yes, I am faithful,' she said gaily.

'Fidèle à tous,' he answered with a scornful laugh, an insult which she took as an excellent joke. He was almost ashamed, in retrospect, of the things he had said to her, which she swallowed as calmly as the *tournedos*. The subject of marriage came up. He told her he was married; his wife, yes, found the war very trying; his *petite fille* was called Elizabeth. She too was married—an announcement which he received with gay incredulity. She had a son, at school in Avignon. She often went to see him. Bancroft here made his deadliest thrust. 'Does your son know what his mother is doing?' he asked.

Not a blush, not a pallor, not a tear: she was not even annoyed, and his contempt for her became absolute. After dinner there was nothing to do but visit the theatre. A futile *revue* was on, and the atmosphere stifling, but it saved the trouble of talking. Bancroft came out with a headache and was for abrupt departure. He dismissed the suggestion of a cinema *très amusant* curtly, and stalked quickly to the cab rank. They were going back to the ship at once, he said. To his intense surprise Louise and the appendage insisted on coming too.

'What on earth do they want to come for?' asked Bowker when he understood.

'Oh, just to get a cab back, I suppose,' was the only possible answer.

Again Louise sat with him in a taxi opposite the two appendages. She noticed his sulkiness: he explained that he had a headache. But she was not to be denied. Though he hardly looked at her, she began to pay him compliments.

'Assez, assez,' he said crossly. 'Vous essayez de m'ensorceler. C'est inutile.'

'Ah, ah!' she cried in ecstasies of apparent gaiety. 'C'est beau, ça. C'est vous l'ensorceleur. Capitaine ensorceleur!' And the joke lasted for the rest of the dreary drive to the docks. The men were silent and Amélie was dozing; only Louise, at intervals ejaculated 'Capitaine ensorceleur!' at him in endearing tones with a laugh like the gurgle of a greenfinch. He did not even grasp her hand, according to the ritual of such occasions.

At length the cab stopped at the dock gates, and the officers got out. *Salutations, remerciements, poignées de main, à quelle adresse?*—and so on. The cabman was well paid for a double journey, and with a salute Bancroft and Bowker turned to walk into the deserted dock. Bancroft was behind, and had gone but a few steps when that fluty voice called to him.

'Capitaine, capitaine ensorceleur!' He went back, and stood at the cab window.

'I have a message to give you,' she said giggling again.

He put his head in at the window, presenting his ear to her, ironically. As he did so he guessed the sequel. It came. A gentle kiss upon his cheek.

Something for nothing, after all. And he had given her nothing in return. With a laugh and an exaggerated bow he had turned away again.

Only as he walked up the gang plank, he wondered. And he wondered again, as he crumpled up the page of his diary, what he ought to have given her. A kiss? A louis? Both? He wondered still.

# THE LAMENT OF SAINT DENIS

By HERBERT READ

' . . . The famous Grecian fanatic, who gave himself out for Dionysius the Areopagite, disciple of St. Paul, and who, under the protection of this venerable name, gave laws and instructions to those that were desirous of raising their souls above all human things, in order to unite them to their great source by sublime contemplation. . . .

*From the Institutes of Johann Lorenz von Mosheim,  
translated by Archibald Maclaine (1764).*

## I

I said the moon, who have been a maiden  
worshipped of man  
Am now but a burnished emblem  
of the sun's span.

But the old witch in me yet  
is wooing wooing,  
And mine is the light of day  
in this memorial noon.

## II

O hallowed is the moon and holy  
A bowl of languished fire. The years are cold—  
Seventy since the sun shone in midnight ecstasy  
Seventy and each year shortening towards the noon  
And then leaving this everlasting night  
With a fitful symbol in the broken sky.

## III

The path is steep  
Narrowing between rock walls: an uncapped cavern

Where the ledges drip and the anguished winds  
Woo hollows of eternal woe.  
And here a rheumy host of men  
Climb burdened, stumbling in the dark unless  
The clouds are torn to let the light  
Stray raggedly across the land. The straining thongs  
Of burdens cut their breasts: breasts will break  
And spill their bloody treasure on the rocks  
But still the unbroken with their burdens will climb  
Between the sheer limits of stone  
Into the tempest that gathers  
Like a dark crown above the hill.

## IV

Their lips  
Are held in the tension of lust, and lines  
Of unenlightened care have cut  
Across the mask upon the bone: the bone is fair in man  
Only the flesh is false, puckering at the influx of light  
In lewd habitual knots of vice.

## V

The bones that dance after death  
are very feat, very nice,  
And the empty box has forgotten  
its load of rocking dice.

## VI

They have gathered on their backs  
Arranged burdens: seventy years  
Have sorted out a neat set  
Of necessary tools: food for a long march,  
A blanket for the night, and a burden of unessential things.  
All coming to a sea-level, having met there  
And having a common journey to make,  
They have formed into ranks  
With a leader at their head.

## VII

At the summit there will be light, or sleep—  
At least some release.

But when the sense of labour in limbs has slackened  
And they are aware in the dark of a level  
And of a bare reach into the sky,  
They are still burdened, and in doubt  
Whether to descend or wait for a dawn.

But a dawn might be very long  
After the slow declension of light.

## VIII

And then a faint rumour in the night  
An approaching murmur of enemies  
Their hearts were suddenly loud in their still bodies  
Fluttering wildly within those livid tunics of flesh

No radiance of the moon  
Came to illustrate their madness,  
Only the wind  
To incorporate their anguish.

The menace grew louder,  
And out of the valley rising  
Into the night came another host  
Clothed in light, with limbs unveiled and free.

Their wan bodies  
Contain their light;  
No radiance is shed  
On rocks or on the opposed throng.

With whirlpool eyes that are innocent  
They search the night

Eager to find for their intense thoughts  
An habitation in light.

## IX

When they came into the presence of the silent standing  
men

When their guiding fingers that should meet wet rocks  
Touched warm flesh,

They halted

And out of the place where they had expected light,  
Out of the dark well of night,

Came the tired voice of an old man:

We hold the way: no other host can pass  
Save across our broken limbs, our broken  
breasts.

We have toiled too long: we can entertain no  
guests

Save death—death who will deliver us to sleep  
and rest.

The voice mingled with the wind shrilling in the rocks  
And rippled across a bent harvest of mute appealing hands.

And then the wind fell to fury.

Vacuous chaos sucked air, spewed the waters of the broken  
cloud

Against flesh and stone.

The old men cowered under the rocks  
Waiting for the end.

But the naked children fled together in their fear.

Too many terrors dwelt in the unseen world.

Inward, in the circle of linked arms,

They could imagine calm.



x

<sup>1</sup>  
 Out of the storm came a figure carrying its severed head  
 Like a lantern in one hand  
 And stood between the throngs  
 And waited till the wind had lost  
 Its melancholy eloquence, and the dark crown of clouds  
 Had drifted into the pervious earth.  
 Then on the distraught scene  
 The stars and the moon shed a fabulous light  
 And the head began to speak.  
 Its eyes were covered with deathly lids  
 And the lips that moved  
 Were like pale rubber valves  
 Distended by a wayward pulse. . . .

xi

Think not that I am a storm-quelling spirit  
 And drive before me all the unordered forces of  
 nature.  
 Rather I am the storm, which, sunk in me  
 For a while evades your senses.  
<sup>2</sup>I was of the lambs of the sacred flock  
 And honoured for my death.  
 But now with a doleful symbol  
 I come to embody this moment of time.

On this mountain top,  
 I stand where a dark stream of old men  
 Has met an impediment of light—  
 A dawn breaking on the southern side  
 Against the blue northern night.  
 These old men who have come to meet me here  
 Are sons of old men, and of old men before,  
 The living point of all the dark forces of the past.  
 And these children of light

<sup>1</sup> *Inferno*: xxviii, 121-2.      <sup>2</sup> *Paradiso*: x, 94.

Are the empty forms winding down to earth  
There to receive sight  
And objects to their senses.

<sup>1</sup>These two streams cross in me,  
Past and future are but two lines  
Intersecting at a point: in me.  
From this point of time I survey eternity,  
I am master of all nature and knowledge  
And all that exists in time  
Moves through me: these fair children  
Pass into life, these old bones disintegrate.  
And I in a moment of time  
Include them all;  
Yesterday, to-morrow and to-day  
Are in my single glance  
And the embrace of my withered arms.  
And here in me is the grace of living:  
Many changes must I undergo  
As these streams give and take  
The lanterns of a temporal light.

I am chaos and dark nothingness;  
The storm you met on the way  
Is now held in me.  
In this lightless body,  
Uncrowned, ungraced, devoid,  
The tumult reigns.  
In a moment,  
In any other moment,  
The storm will issue,  
The chaos will be without—  
In the past and in the future,  
Yesterday and to-morrow.

And in that moment I shall stand

<sup>1</sup>*Bæthius: De Consolatione, II., vi.*

In ordained radiance.

A visible exaltation shall possess my limbs,  
My lips shall be rosy and the porch of life,  
And my eyes the light of reason.

## xii

Rocks  
rain  
riven rocks  
eroded plains

Pain  
anguished eyes  
hands and lips  
entreat in vain

Here is night  
fabulous light  
of icy stars  
owlets screech

Our child is lost  
in dream I have seen  
a black bat laced  
to his dead white face.

# A POET AND HIS TECHNIQUE

By T. STURGE MOORE

## II

THOUGH delighted by numerous corroborations of my ideas in M. Valéry's critical writings, I could but feel the more anxious at the degree in which he countenances some fallacies I have given much time to exposing. He joins hands with me in belief that high poetry must be the product of the whole nature, not of a mere specialist faculty. The poet should be a master of verse, but can never be merely or chiefly that. We are also cordially at one as to the primordial necessity for poetry of beauty, and agree that its sensuous and ornamental elements must dominate. On the theory of taste I found many close encounters with my thoughts, and on many minor points we should find it difficult to misunderstand one another, and even where we differ, I cannot feel certain that M. Valéry does not differ from himself: for he seems often to imply that the relations in which the beauty of a poem consists are all contained within it. Yet he may not distinguish clearly between the beauty of a poem and that of the complete æsthetic experience. His remarks on Racine's line suggest that he does not:

Dans l'Orient désert quel devint mon ennui!

The additional glamour that the association of the words 'Orient', 'désert', 'ennui' has for us, belongs to the æsthetic experience not to the beauty of the verse. Association cannot directly be a part of the beautiful object, though associations in the mind of the artist may subtly influence his rhythms and arrangements, so that

we are impressed by their past activity when we actually ignore what they were. Still, our associations cannot change the rhythm and arrangement of a verse, though they can enrich and at times corrupt our admiration of it. No doubt, a verse might have been written employing those three words, but lacking the deftly woven alliterations and sonorities of Racine's line, and occurring in an altogether inferior context. Would such a verse have drawn forth the more recently acquired aura that the word 'désert' has for us? No, actual beauties of meaning and sound were needed so to conjure up recollections of Loti's and Fromentin's pages.

Again in his conference on 'The situation of Baudelaire', he tells a tale apparently for the sake of a moral or practical inference to be drawn from it. As history I have little fault to find. I do not doubt that Baudelaire gained from contact with the astonishing genius of Edgar Allan Poe a vision of the opportunity and the means by which a poet might differentiate his work from De Musset's, Lamartine's and Hugo's. But to speak as though practically no other consideration could have had such weight, and as if this ambition created his situation, seems to me, not only an exaggeration but a misdirection of inquiry. Time's first poet must have been otherwise impelled. He at least discovered opportunities for beauty in speech and stressed and combined them without any political intent of dethroning the last monarch, and surely he was moved by delight in recognizing and freeing the beauty that is in language. Is not this still the primordial, the supreme motive for every poet? If Racine wrote tragedies of a quite distinct character from Corneille's finest successes, may not this difference have been imposed on him willy nilly by a more supple nature with an extended mobility and resilience? May not his psyche also have prompted his adoption of accent and emotional quality from Venus' lament over Adonis in

La Fontaine's idyll? M. Valéry imagines him to have been already intent on this assimilation at twenty? May he not have previously even desired to be more like Corneille and less like La Fontaine, but found he could not succeed in that direction, which his natural admiration for his great fore-runner had suggested? Ambition no doubt would reinforce this native bent later, but scarcely before the tragedy he was writing seemed to him actually as fine, and yet quite unlike his senior's finest. In M. Valéry's attack on these notions, I seem to detect the belief, that likeness to or difference from something else, may be part of the beauty of a poem, as it may be part of the aim of a poet, but this, if the value, *beauty*, is intrinsic (and the philosophical and commonsense reasons for supposing it so are extremely formidable) is a self-contradictory notion. Baudelaire, too, was not, I think, more ambitious than he was delighted with verbal beauty; he was certainly both punctilious and generous in admiration of Gautier and Hugo, as much so as M. Valéry himself in regard for Mallarmé. But another idea is closely associated in his mind with this of a 'poet's situation'. He points out how Poe's influence has fecundated Jules Verne by *The Adventures of Gordon Pym*; Gaboriau by *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*; Villiers de L'Isle Adam by *Ligeia*; Dostoievski by *The Tell-Tale Heart*, as well as many of those who have attempted to rival these writers; beside by his 'Poetic Principle' impregnating Baudelaire, and, through him, the whole symbolist movement down to M. Valéry himself with his quasi-philosophical meditations and ecstasies. And he might have added that through Rossetti he had influenced Swinburne, the youthful Morris, Oscar Wilde, Francis Thompson, and Walter de la Mare. For Rossetti was convinced at nineteen by Poe's *Poetic Principle*, and thought *The Raven* so perfect, that it could only be equalled by complicating its despair with the possibilities of Heaven, writing with this idea not only

*The Blessed Damosel* but *The Portrait* poems which, for intense beauty and imagination, leave the poor *Raven* nowhere. M. Valéry suggests that this kind of fecundity is the surest criterion of the value of poetic genius, not the production of masterpieces but a long descent of prolific influence. But just think of it, here we have a poem poor in imagination, written in a cheap falsetto, producing a prodigious progeny, the masterpieces of Rossetti and Baudelaire and many whom they have profoundly influenced! While, on the other hand, we have *The Ancient Mariner* as childless as the Tragedies of Shakespeare or of Racine, though generations have vainly toiled to continue these successes! Fecundity of this kind can no more vouch for Baudelaire's value, than it can create in Poe any equivalent for it. Poems like *The Portrait* or *Le Balcon* alone prove Rossetti and Baudelaire poets of high rank, the absence of such poems in Poe's work sinks it to a lower level.

M. Valéry thinks that Poe first consciously and rationally divided the didactic, the narrative and the informative elements of literature from the musical, ornamental and sensuously suggestive, abandoning those to prose, bidding poetry content herself with these. A notion again founded on history, on a supposed evolution or progress of kinds, first the epic, then the drama, then odes, then lyrics, last 'pure poetry'! So the last is best because it is last, because of its relation to the others; but we know that in all sorts of works, the latest has very often not been best, we actually judge that some of the best is founded in all these stages, and that none of them were wholly better or worse than those that preceded or succeeded them. The historical observation, supposing it to be far more exact than it is, can never yield any presumption as to the various values of the successive instances, being concerned with truth about facts, not with beauty.

Again he suggests a new definition for romantic and

classical: classicism is related to romanticism as coming after it, and consciously trying to be different by avoiding obvious romantic errors—an interesting observation containing a certain amount of historical truth, but obviously M. Valéry is inclined to give it value as a criterion of quality. He once preferred and thinks he might still prefer an equal beauty, which he felt sure was the result of conscious artifice, to one produced because the poet was carried away.

His argument almost asserts that a flight of inspiration, *Kubla Khan*, for instance, can never so fully satisfy its author or ourselves, as it might have done, had he submitted it to the castigation of a more stringent technique. Not only should the most rigorous classical standard be accepted, however arbitrary it appear, but the poet's own taste should evolve supplementary rules as peremptory as those observable in the example of his most perfect predecessors. Since only by this discipline can he transcend his instinctive and habitual limitations. I think experience may prove M. Valéry right, yet his opinion though pious, is as yet only a hypothesis. Its possible errancy must be allowed for, and the following considerations are surely some counterpoise. A few rapidly produced works have attained great beauty. If two poems, diverse in this respect, have ever been peers, then such a drill can be held neither of itself to augment or to lessen value. In which case M. Valéry's judgment would only reveal the natural prejudice of a craftsman against which he should as critic be on his guard. The spontaneous beauty he pleads is a product of only part of the man which has escaped from his own control, but what difference does this make if when he is self-possessed again his judgment fully ratifies his gush, or if, had he been adept in an uncompromising technique, he would still have found nothing to correct? With an almost fantastic rigour he suggests that enthusiasm cannot be part of the frame of



mind of a writer. But! but! is it then a poem's relation to the mind that endites which gives it value, or solely its internal organisation? No doubt, the traditional dependence on inspiration is equally misleading. As he well says, rhymes are more proper to suggest thoughts, than thoughts rhymes; rhythm is hungry for matter, whereas matter may be indifferent to rhythm, or prefer to do without it. What we ask of a poet is not information about his states of mind or about the world, but a beautiful sequence of words and meanings which his skill has not let alone till it was beyond the reach of his imagination to suggest any further improvement. But the time he takes in attaining this result or the number of foregoing stages is immaterial. Straight off is as good as nine years of revision, if the result be equally beautiful. Though we say to the poetical gusher, who assures us that he really felt all he has written, 'But we do not read poetry to know what poets feel, we read poems because they are wholes, composed of harmonized words and meanings which inter-echo symphonically,' we must also reply to a poet's friends who assure us that he has suppressed all 'personal lyricism, every avowal incompatible with the nature of "pure poetry", till "I" for him stands for a consciousness freed from all particular circumstances.' 'Neither do we read poetry to learn how an impossibly abstract consciousness would feel and perceive, but merely because beauty charms our admiration into contemplation.'

M. Valéry has himself criticised this notion of 'pure poetry', comparing it to the effort to reach an absolute, in the creation of a vacuum or of a zero in temperature, and has noted its practical futility in exhausting the poet in an interminable effort. Yet he seems to cling to Poe's arbitrary division of themes, rejecting the historical, ethical and informative, without asking himself whether any of these may not create beautiful relations between groups of words and meanings. I believe there are such

relations which cannot exist if poetry be confined to the musical, ornamental and sensuously suggestive elements of language, and to such purport as these elements can convey. Though history, ethics, and science gain nothing by being expounded in 'the language of the soul', it need not follow that such language gains nothing by adopting scenes, values and notions drawn from them. Is not the negative supposition an hasty, ill-considered imitation of that specialisation which is a deplored necessity even in science, because the time and attention requisite have become superhuman. But in art, where the human completeness and poise of an organic whole are aimed at, such exclusiveness is a confusion in thought and without excuse.

Besides, had Poe any real grounds for curtailing the memory in which the effect of a poem can exist, to the actual limit of intensely excited attention, which obviously varies immensely between man and man? The American poet patently started from hasty and false observations. It is not true that a reader beginning *Paradise Lost* at Book VII would receive pleasure equal to that he might have by beginning at Book I. And he might as well begin *Macbeth* at the Second Act, or *Phèdre* at the IVth, as begin with Book II. Relations of prime importance to the effect of the later books depend on our memory of the earlier ones. Memory can bridge a lapse of hours, or from day to day, with as great efficiency as she can a single hour; and scan a poetic whole to the culmination of which it has taken her a week to arrive, as clearly, with as well-nourished an admiration, as after one completed in an hour. Poe, though his misjudgments have had so strangely fecund an influence, left no creation to stand beside those of Homer, Dante or Milton, nor have any of those for whom his error seemed to open a door.

Obviously the full beauty of a poem more often dawns on us after a lapse of time. When the excitement of first hearing it has died down, then admiration has time to

spread her wings and we rise to the serenity of contemplation of which we had been incapable while the excitement was strong.

These notions of historical sequence entailing improved value, or of historical influence being a criterion of beauty, are scientific, not æsthetic. They are founded on the recognition of facts as true, not on the enjoyment of qualities as beautiful. They are too purely intellectual to be in the best sense even intelligent where an æsthetic judgment is called for. Remember that Poe threw out these ideas, scanted of leisure, forlorn of intelligent support, under pressure of financial and moral distress. He was extremely ingenious, and it is precisely ingenuity which, like grit between the teeth, spoils the taste of so much French poetry even by great poets.

Were the walls of the Muses' precinct composed of doors, some of which have stood open for ages, whereas those still closed could only be opened by a pick-lock, we should imagine that once thrown wide, less cunning, simpler and deeper natures could enter by these, that glorious domain which is so extensive as to englobe the geographer's earth with a reflection brighter and more magical than any mirage.

And so, too, when M. Thibaudet bids us admire the coincidences with Bergson's ideas which he finds in M. Valéry's poems, we must insist that even if it were as he says, the fact would not add to our admiration of these latter, but render it uneasy, since we desire their beauty to be as independent of the soundness of any philosophy, as that of the Iliad is of truth about the existence of the Olympians. And M. Valéry has himself pointed out how the task of presenting philosophical ideas and that of writing poems, requires two entirely diverse techniques, and the chance of these being able to coincide in the same use of the same words, is one in many myriads, though we cannot exclude its possibility. On the con-

trary my admiration has gathered confidence, as with familiarity the conviction has matured that these poems are free from definite or foregone tendency; the poet's thoughts, like his stanzas, have delighted him because he discovered them, and their order, in pushing the harmony of language further and further, till it begot fresh perceptions and unforeseen illumination.

I am much more ready to welcome the suggestion that M. Valéry, in spite of his scornful cleanness from all 'prophétisme', has lighted on vistas which opened for him an escape from the desolating companionship of his youthful creation, M. Teste—ghost and negation of a man—whom he himself has completely laid, by remarking that we can only value men for what they do, make, or say. Teste, who gave the world neither works, actions, nor wisdom, could therefore not rank as successful *man*, though a brilliantly gifted youngster might for a time thus exalt him. But is there a counter suggestion in the fact that *Palme* comes last among his *Charmes*, that 'Une Sage' in it has a capital? His use of capitals is always full of intention. 'Sagesse', 'Intelligence', 'Ciel', are thus given almost biblical force; but in the following stanzas, the last in the book, the capital 'S' seems to carry something more than this, a suggestion beyond.

Cependant qu'elle s'ignore  
Entre le sable et le ciel,  
Chaque jour qui luit encore  
Lui compose un peu de miel.  
Sa douceur est mesurée  
Par la divine durée  
Qui ne compte pas les jours,  
Mais bien qui les dissimule  
Dans un suc où s'accumule  
Tout l'arome des amours.

Parfois si l'on désespère,  
 Si l'adorable rigueur  
 Malgré tes larmes n'opère  
 Que sous ombre de langueur,  
 N'accuse pas d'être avare  
 Une Sage qui prépare  
 Tant d'or et d'autorité:  
 Par la sève solennelle  
 Une espérance éternelle  
 Monte à la maturité!

Ces jours qui te semblent vides  
 Et perdus pour l'univers  
 Ont des racines avides  
 Qui travaillent les déserts.  
 La substance chevelue  
 Par les ténèbres élue  
 Ne peut s'arrêter jamais  
 Jusqu'aux entrailles du monde,  
 De poursuivre l'eau profonde  
 Que demandent les sommets.

Patience, patience,  
 Patience dans l'azur!  
 Chaque atome de silence  
 Est la chance d'un fruit mûr  
 Viendra l'heureuse surprise:  
 Une colombe, la brise,  
 L'ébranlement le plus doux  
 Une femme qui s'appuie,  
 Feront tomber cette pluie  
 Ou l'on se jette à genoux!

Qu'un peuple à present s'écroule,  
 Palme! . . . irrésistiblement!  
 Dans la poudre qu'il se roule  
 Sur les fruits du firmament!  
 Tu n'as pas perdu ces heures,  
 Si légère tu demeures

Après ces beaux abandons;  
Pareille à celui qui pense  
Et dont l'âme se dépense  
A s'accroître de ses dons!

These stanzas are an interpretation of the significant use an angel made of his eyelid. Have they not unction like that of the best hymns? 'Une Sage' is not just the Palm herself, nor the poet's Muse, nor yet 'divine duration' or that would have had its capital, nay, is not even Nature merely, but as divine a friend as that 'Wisdom' who cries to and woos us in the Book of Proverbs—is indeed She whose rigour is adorable. No doubt we should not transport any implication from the position of *Palme* in the book and the use of this capital 'S' outside the substance of the poem, where it hovers like the fire over an opal. *Palme* may quite reasonably come last as being of all these poems the most absolutely a charm, the most cordial, the most seductive incantation both for ear and mind. To do M. Teste justice he proposed the goal which its last three lines assert to be achieved by patient living. Not to find by thinking, but to add to life what thought has found is difficult, he asserted. Now obviously the word soul often stands for the accumulation of such additions. A new-born babe has a 'white soul' that is potentially for such a collection, too many souls are mere chaotic aggregates; what is admired is one in which these treasures compose an organic whole—a fabric finely woven of tempered moods, ready enterprise, and resilient grace disposing clearly conceived truths and precisely registered facts—all that the toil and candour of man's spirit can result in. The whole of this conception and a great deal more hangs in solution within those three terminal lines, with which not only the poem but the book closes.

No doubt it is not that fire flash on his opal, which will date M. Valéry's poems, but his interest in physical and philosophic conceptions, lines like

Mais rendre la lumière  
Suppose d'ombre une morne moitié.

and

Entre le vide et l'événement pur  
J'attends l'écho de ma grandeur interne.

Is there not as topical a mixture in them as Milton's politics and theology cause in *Lycidas* and *Samson Agonistes*, but are they not equally inevitable for M. Valéry? And conceptions which are in this sense, not to be avoided by the writer's mind under given circumstances, become an inseparable part of the successful æsthetic whole, necessary to its organism. Even though subsequent admirers cease to award such notions the importance which they had for the poet, they cherish them as a vital part of his work's beauty. Those who find Homer's gods less poetical than his heroes, those who cannot admire Milton or Dante because their respective theologies were so impossible, those for whom Racine's 'politesse rampante' kills whole scenes and speeches in his tragedies, are blind to the beauty which belongs to these various works as wholes, however keenly they appreciate passages or lines chosen from them.

The paramount feature of M. Valéry's æsthetic is the intention of casting a complete charm over the perfect psyche. Herein his aim coincides with Keats' and, in a more contracted aspect, with Racine's. Such all-embracing desire to ravish necessarily makes other ambitions appear one-sided or trivial. A certain degree of difficulty may be proper to such a spell; the intellect is part of the psyche, dull minds are only partially human, the poet has perhaps a right to treat his reader as an equal, though not as one specially trained. He must not demand a preparation, the exact parallel of his own, as the eccentrics ever tend to do, whether like Blake they are less educated, or like Browning more so than the average intelligent person.

Has not M. Valéry's genius been unnecessarily confined by the doctrine of 'pure poetry', which he has never quite discarded? Is there not a purer poetry, the opportunity for which only arises from the interplay of human characters vividly presented at the crises of their lives? So that narrative and drama achieve a more complex and complete intensity than is possible in lyrical meditations? Mr. Yeats is rarely so felicitous as M. Valéry save in quite brief passages. Yet are not *Baile's Strand*, *Deidre*, *The Jealousy of Emer*, and *The Dreaming of the Bones* more highly organised wholes? In them felicitous suggestion and music have a richer diversity of relations, because they have arisen out of event and character.

As much may also be claimed for the central scene of Mr. Gordon Bottomley's *Gruach*. Yes, the disadvantages as well as the advantages of having been Mallarmé's favourite disciple, are evident in M. Valéry's *Charmes*. He seems not yet quite recovered from the glamour cast over him by that eccentric necromancer's too cunning thoughts. Though probably more generously gifted than either Mr. Yeats or Mr. Bottomley, his imagination appears less free to use more exquisite resources. And the cause of his confinement is the doctrine by which he gives intellectual value, *truth*, a primacy, a solitary supremacy which does not belong to it, the values beauty and goodness are its peers; though he have most rare and exquisite touch for both, to him they seem ever subordinates of the dictatorial intellect. This is the explanation of the drear pathos of M. Teste, of the unsatisfactoriness of *Le Cimetière Marin*, when compared with *La Pythie* and *Palme*, though it contain rarer beauties than either. In this respect alone he is of his period, and a 'stranger in eternity'.

Baudelaire, Verlaine, Rimbaud, Mallarmé, and Valéry, all cast longing and envious glances at our nineteenth



century poets. Yet without a smile our young men, while worshipping these French masters, despise and depreciate work from which their idols sought to assimilate excellence. To such ironical situations the politics of movements and revivals must always lead. A kindlier interpretation of the facts would underline how often English poets lack constructive ability. The French, though they have this, mostly yearn in vain for that emotional and imaginative freedom, that vital glow characteristic of our nineteenth-century masters. M. Valéry's poems flush with delight in their own beauty, yet carry no waste, admit no carelessness. In them both excellencies are fused.

# CATCHING THE BUS

By RICHARD CHURCH

WHAT? Only these few moments more together,  
And nothing cleared; our very cause for mee'ning  
Half fogged in this disturbance of our meeting?  
This is too weak for tragedy, but tears  
We share. Are they bewilderment, these tears;  
Few, hot, and angry drops we drop together?

What summoned us, if not some urge within  
Crying for union; not union got by kisses  
And that thin prying madness following kisses?  
That way would be dishonest, not mature.  
No, not denied, but kept till soul-mature.  
First, Order has to be arranged within.

Have we that? Scan your heart quickly—quickly!  
Words waste a revelation; looks are swifter.  
Dumb? Hear my eyes! Fasten there! Swifter  
We fly, gazing wider, learning more.  
Everything we've gained now. Failure's more  
Than triumph; flesh flies as spirit, quickly—quickly!

The bus bears down—but now it seems sand-sunken,  
Clogged, held back. The flowing river-water  
Stands, and tipping gulls hang tilt above the water.  
Tis we so fierce in flight! The moment's gone—  
Wise century! No word said, you are gone.  
I stand alone here, travelled, tired, age-sunken.

# ANTHEIL, 1924-1926

By EZRA POUND

## I

THANKS to a rare stroke of discretion, or rather two strokes on the part of two patrons of music, it has been possible (Paris, June to July, 1926) to hear most of the work of George Antheil in sequence, and thereby to revise, videlicet augment, one's estimate of this composer.

I see no reason to retract any of the claims made for him in an earlier *Criterion* notice. He has very greatly consolidated his position, and, during the past two years made important advances.

The new works demanding attention are:

1. A symphony for five instruments (flute, bassoon, trumpet, trombone and alto.), the initiation, very possibly, of a new phase of chamber music, with Mr. Antheil in the role of Watteau, or some tonal equivalent.

2. A string quartette, presented by The Quattuor Krettly, rather more difficult of analysis than the symphony, unless one has biographical data as follows: in 1924 Mr. Antheil made a string quartette. It was hastily produced, the author kept tearing it to pieces and re-doing it, up to the day of the concert, and finally 'reformed it altogether'.

It had, at the start, what his elders (the present writer included) used to regard as form (i.e. as that element is discernable in Mr. Antheil's own 1st Violin Sonata). The said element seemed to annoy Mr. Antheil, and he proceeded to remove it in the interest of some more arcane principle of unity.

This process of elimination had begun in the 2nd Violin Sonata. It continued in the early quartette to the final effacement of same, and the present quartette, now after several performances approved by so good a musician as

Monsieur Krettly, is manifestly what Mr. Antheil was driving at two and a half years ago.

Krettly has got used to it. I console myself with the thought that Keats was at first considered incomprehensible because he omitted various moral fervours and axioms which the eighteenth century had got used to finding in poesy . . . in the favour of some element . . . conceivable to himself.

Technically Mr. Antheil has, in this quartette, avoided the smaller clichés. The polyphonic element in his composition continues its development in the Symphony in F (eighty-five instruments), and in this partially conservative work the composer shows his ample ability for dealing with the full orchestra. He avoids various habitual conclusions, and commits numerous innovations in the details of orchestration. It is a symphony on more or less accepted lines (voices from the audience murmuring: 'reactionnaire sans le savoir'), a symphony with the usual slush left out, or even 'a symphony debunked'. We suppose this is what Mr. Koussevitzky means when he complains that, 'It is all here' (tapping his forehead), 'it has no heart'.

It should in any case terminate discussion of Mr. Antheil's musical competence, and has, indeed, largely done so.

If none of the above works would have 'made' Mr. Antheil's reputation, they all go to making it solid, and to establish the copiousness of his talents. None of them would give a reason for discussing him in a periodical not exclusively devoted to music; a competent musical chronicle would however record an innovation in chamber music, an addition to the literature of the string quartette, and a new symphony for large orchestra, which latter is a means ready to hand, and needing, probably, nutriment.

circle of reference. I mean that this work definitely takes music out of the concert hall, meaning thereby that it deals with a phase of life not hitherto tackled by musicians and freighted before the act with reference to already existing musical reference.

Three years ago Antheil was talking vaguely of 'tuning up' whole cities, of 'silences twenty minutes long *in the form*', etc. One thought of it as mere or 'pure' speculation, the usual jejune aspiration of genius, and 'one' (one, at least, of those who heard the vague talk) dismissed it from his mind.

Now, after the three years, I do not in the least regret any then seeming hyperbole, or any comparison of Antheil and Stravinsky that I then made in the former's favour.

With the performance of the Ballet Mecanique one can conceive the possibility of organising the sounds of a factory, let us say of boiler-plate or any other clangorous noisiness, the actual sounds of the labour, the various tones of the grindings; according to the needs of the work, and yet, with such pauses and durées, that at the end of the eight hours, the men go out not with frayed nerves, but elated—fatigued, yes, but elated.

I mean that we have here the chance, a mode, a music that no mere loudness can obliterate, but that serves us, as the primitive chanteys for rowing, for hauling on cables; 'Blow the man down' and such like; have served savages or simpler ages, for labours, ashore and afloat. And this is definitely a new musical act; a new grip on life by the art, a new period, a bigger break with the habits of acceptance than any made by Bach or by Beethoven, an age coming into its own, an art coming into its own, 'and no mean labour'.

The 'Sacre' stands, but its cubes, solid as they are, are in proportion to the Ballet Mecanique as the proportions of architecture are to those of town-planning.

Technically, the fact is, that Mr. Antheil has used

longer durations than any other musician has ever attempted to use . . . much longer durations.

'Noces' falls to pieces. After the Ballet it sounds like a few scraps of Wagner, a Russian chorale (quite good) a few scraps of Chopin, a few high notes 'pianolistic'.

Technically, Mr. Antheil has discovered the Pleyela, and freed it from ignominy; it is now an instrument, not the piano's poor ape. (I skip the details of the innovation.)

If in the Ballet Antheil has mastered these long 'durées', these larger chunks of time, in the third Violin Sonata, he has made a less obvious gain, for this Sonata thinks in time's razor edge. Whether this shows incontestably on its written pages, I cannot say, but it does show in its playing by the composer and by Miss Olga Rudge, who has borne the brunt of presentation in all three sonatas.

This is not a simple question of playing 'in time' or even 'in time with each other'.

It means that, via Stravinsky and Antheil and possibly one other composer, we are brought to a closer conception of time, to a faster beat, to a closer realisation or, shall we say, 'decomposition' of the musical atom.

The mind, even the musician's mind, is conditioned by contemporary things, our minimum, in a time when the old atom is 'bombarded' by electricity, when chemical atoms and elements are more strictly considered, is no longer the minimum of the sixteenth century pre-chemists. Both this composer and this executant, starting with the forces and iterations of the 1st Violin Sonata have acquired—perhaps only half-consciously—a new precision. There is something new in violin writing and in violin playing. Violinists of larger reputation who looked at the earlier sonata and walked away, those who thought it 'bizarre', will possibly awake and find themselves a little out of date, and the initiative of the first performer, may in time receive its reward. There will be a new hardness and dryness in fashion, and the old oily slickness of the Viennese school

will receive diminished applause. There may even be found those of severer taste who will prefer the distinct outline of a Ballet Mechanique as shown by the Pleyela role alone, or with the meagre allowance of mechanical sound offered on June 19th, to the seduction of cymbals and xylophones (July performance), or who will at least find it easier to comprehend in the former way, at the start, awaiting the composer's next move, and believing that the vitality of music is in its lateral rather than its perpendicular movement.

# ON AN UNREPRINTED ARTICLE BY THACKERAY

By LEWIS MELVILLE

IF parody is accepted as criticism, then Thackeray began to take exercise in that branch of literature while he was still at school. In *Cabbages* he mocked at Letetia Elizabeth Landon's ultra-sentimental poem, *Violets*. He wrote occasional verse; and at Cambridge contributed and assisted to edit those ephermal University papers, *The Snob* and *The Gownsmen*—the price of copies of these to-day is beyond belief. When working a little and playing a great deal at Weimar, 'I have been reading Shakespeare in German,' he wrote to his mother. 'If I could ever do the same for Schiller in English, I should be proud of having conferred a benefit on my country. . . . I do believe him to be, after Shakespeare, *the poet*.' He did not, however, turn seriously to literature or journalism until just after he came of age, by which time he had lost a considerable portion of his patrimony and was in search of a profession.

On January 5th, 1833, F. W. N. (commonly called 'Alphabet') Bailey founded a weekly paper with the imposing title: *The National Standard and Journal of Literature, Science, Music, Theatricals, and the Fine Arts*. To this Thackeray contributed verses and caricatures, and in the nineteenth number published on May 11th, announced himself as the new proprietor in characteristic style:

'Under the heading of the *National Standard* of ours, there originally appeared the following: "Edited by



F. W. N. Bayley, Esq. . . . assisted by the most eminent Literary Men of the Day." Now we have *changé tout cela*; no, not exactly *tout cela*, for we still retain the assistance of a host of literary talent, but Frederick William Naylor Bayley has gone. We have got free of the Old Bailey, and changed the Governor.'

The first review Thackeray ever wrote for this (or any other) paper was on Sarah Austin's *Characteristics of Goethe*. Then he dealt with Robert Montgomery's *Woman: The Angel of Life*. The opening is delightful:

'There is one decidedly pleasant line in this book. It is "Frederick Schoberl, jun., 4, Leicester Street, Leicester Square." It sounds like softest music in attending ears, after having gone through 183 pages of Montgomery's rhyme, flanked by some fifteen pages of Montgomery's prose. We never had any notion that the name of Schoberl would have sounded so harmoniously in our ears, until we found it to be the term and conclusion of the work called *Woman*, set up as the last milestone to show that our wearisome pilgrimage was at an end. And yet we are unjust in calling it wearisome, for the poem is of the most soothing kind. "Not poppy nor mandragora, nor all the drowsy syrups of this world," can compare with the gentle narcotic here afforded us by Turrill [the publisher of this volume]. Many have been the trades of that eminent person. He was a knife-grinder and a haberdasher, a stationer and fancy penman, a Windsor soap vendor, and a commissioner for the sale of Hunt's roasted corn and Godbold's vegetable balsam. He then went into the publishing line, and he now appears as a vendor of opiates.'

The conclusion has a thoroughly Titmarshian touch, for, after quoting fourteen lines, he says:

'These are nice verses. On examination we find that the compositor, by some queer blunder, had printed them backwards; but, as it does not seem to spoil the sense, we

shall not give him the trouble of setting them up again. They are just as good one way as the other; and, indeed, the same might be said of the whole book.'

That erudite footman, Charles James Yellowplush, must have read this, for when he was trouncing 'Sawedwadgeorgeearllyttonbulwig's' play, 'The Sea Captain', he prints a sentence in it that he has 'tried every way: backards, forards, and in all sorts of trancepositions . . . all which are so sensible as the fust passidge.'

Next, on June 15th and 22nd, 1833, appeared in the *National Standard* a review of *Godolphin*, which is unquestionably from the pen of Thackeray, though strangely enough it has never been reprinted, and which is the *raison d'être* of the present article. The *National Standard* never made good; it passed away, having cost Thackeray a very considerable sum of money, on February 1st, 1834.

When Thackeray first began to contribute to *Fraser's Magazine* has not been settled. His first known composition was a translation of Béranger's *Il était un roi d'Yvetot* in the issue for May, 1834; but the bibliographers attribute to him about this time—and it is only fair to say, with a query—reviews of Charles Whitehead's *Lives and Exploits of English Highwaymen, Pirates and Robbers*, Mrs. Trollope's *Paris and the Parisians* in 1835, James Grant's *The Great Metropolis*, Savage Landor's *A Satire on Satirists*, and a considerable number of novels, including Gleig's *The Subaltern*, Chamier's *The Young Muscovites*, Theodore Hook's *The Parson's Daughter*, and Ainsworth's *Rookwood*.

When Thackeray came to London after a long stay in Paris as Correspondent of the ill-fated *Constitutional and Public Ledger*, he set up as a professional journalist, and became a regular contributor to *Fraser*, and, for a while, to *The Times*.

He wrote for the latter an appreciative notice of Carlyle's *French Revolution*, in which he said: 'After perusing the

whole of this extraordinary work, we can allow, almost to their fullest extent, the high qualities with which Mr. Carlyle's idolaters endow him. But never did a book sin so grievously from outward appearance, or a man's style so mar his subject and dim his genius. It is stiff and rugged, it abounds with Germanisms and Latinisms, strange epithets, and choking double words, astonishing to the admirers of simple Addisonian English, to those who love history as it gracefully runs in Hume, or struts pompously in Gibbon—no such style is Mr. Carlyle's. A man, at the first onset, must take breath, at the end of a sentence, or, worse still, go to sleep in the midst of it. But these hardships become lighter as the traveller grows accustomed to the road, and he speedily learns to admire and sympathise; just as he would admire a Gothic cathedral in spite of the quaint carvings and hideous images on door and buttress.'

This review attracted the attention of Carlyle, who wrote of it to his brother: 'I understand there have been many reviews of a mixed character. I got one in *The Times* last week. The writer is one Thackeray, a half-monstrous Cornish giant, kind of painter, a Cambridge man, and Paris newspaper correspondent, who is now writing for his life in London. . . . His article is rather like him, and, I suppose calculated to do the book good.'

Thackeray's first success as a reviewer was, when, writing as Yellowplush, he took as his subject, John Henry Skelton's absurd volume, *My Book, or The Anatomy of Conduct*. This humorous article established him so thoroughly that the next year he was in a position to threaten James Fraser that he would 'strike for wages'. 'You pay more to others, I find, than to me,' he wrote, 'and so I intend to make some fresh conditions about Yellowplush. I shall write no more of that gentleman's remarks except at the rate of twelve guineas a sheet, and with a drawing for each number in which his story appears

—the drawing two guineas. . . . I am a better workman than most in your crew and deserve a better price.' It is to be presumed that his demand was met.

It is not necessary to refer to Thackeray's articles on books one by one. He bitterly attacked, for its false sentiment and hypocrisy, Mrs. Trollope's *Vicar of Wrexhill*: 'The blasphemy of the Vicar is of the simple kind here; not a compound hypocrisy, such as he displays in his prayers with Miss Fanny, when he contrives, in addressing the Deity, to make most passionate and licentious avowals to the young girl. These prayers we shall not make it our business to transplant into our columns; it would be a pity to take them from the congenial soil in which they grow. But it is a gross and monstrous libel on the part of the authoress, who might, if she chose, describe one hypocrite of evangelical Christians, to make them *all* liars and hypocrites. She does not introduce an evangelical dinner into her book, but it is a scene of drunkenness and debauchery, overt and covert, such as no woman ever conceived before.'

Another notable outburst by Thackeray was when he wrote in *The Times* on *A Diary Relative to George IV and Queen Caroline*, supposed to be written by the novelist, Lady Charlotte Bury, who had been Lady-in-waiting to Her Majesty:

'We may read this diary, and say, indeed, it is a ridicule to bear a towering name, or to pretend to the old virtue which characterized it, or to the honour which formerly belonged to it. It is ridicule indeed to come of a noble race, and uphold the well-known honour of an ancient line. What matters it if you can read in your family record the history of a thousand years of loyalty and courage, of all that is noble in sentiment, honest and brave in action? —the pride of ancestors is a faded superstition—the emulation of them a needless folly. There is no need now to be loyal to your Prince, or tender to his memory. Take

his bounty while living, share his purse and his table, gain his confidence, and learn his secrets, flatter him, cringe to him, vow to him an unbounded fidelity—and when he is dead, *write a diary and betray him!*

When Thomas Roscoe's biography appeared, Thackeray wrote enthusiastically about Fielding as 'one of the greatest humourists in our language'. '... A man may be very much injured by perusing maudlin sentimental tales, but cannot be hurt, though he may be shocked every now and then, by reading works of sterling humour, like the greater part of these, full of benevolence, practical wisdom, and generous sympathy with mankind.'

This last sentence indicates very clearly that, while Thackeray could from the bottom of his heart praise the English Humourists of the Eighteenth Century—it must be admitted that he hated Sterne and was unfair to the character of Swift—he could not bring himself to express even an amused tolerance of Ainsworth's stories and the earlier novels of Bulwer Lytton. The Newgate School of fiction, which made heroes of murderers, highwaymen, and adulterers, with its false sentiment and mock heroics, left a bad taste in his mouth.

Thackeray declared that Ainsworth did not dare to paint his heroes as the scoundrels that he well knew them to be, and, for his part, he determined to take a number of villains, and portray them in their real colours, so nearly as the British public would permit, and so dispel the false sympathy for the criminals that Ainsworth and Lytton were engendering. Like the others, he went to the *Newgate Calendar*, and took from it his text for the story of Catherine Hayes and her associates in crime. *Catherine*, supposed to be written by Ikey Solomon, of Horsemonger Lane, 'was disgusting, but not disgusting enough,' Thackeray told his mother, and George Augustus Sala has related that the public forgot that the story was a satire and 'became absorbed and fascinated by a

wonderfully realistic fiction'.

Lytton's pose as a dandy, which really was no concern of the reviewer, infuriated him, and led him to commit one of his rare errors of taste:

'To talk of *Ernest Maltravers* now is to rake up a dead man's ashes. The poor creature came into the world almost still-born, and though he has hardly been before the public for a month, is forgotten as much as *Rienzi* or *The Disowned*. What a pity that Mr. Bulwer will not learn wisdom with age, and confine his attention to subjects at once more grateful to the public and more suitable to his powers! He excels in the *genre* of Paul de Kock, and is always striving after the style of Plato; he has a keen sense of the ridiculous, and, like Liston or Cruikshank, and other artists, persists that his real vein is the sublime. What a number of sparkling magazine-papers, what an outpouring of fun and satire might we have had from Neddy Bulwer, had he not thought fit to turn moralist, metaphysician, politician, poet and be Edward Heaven-knows-what Bulwer, Esquire and M.P., a dandy, a philosopher, a spouter at Radical meetings. We speak feelingly, for we knew the youth at Trinity Hall, and have a tenderness even for his tomfooleries. He has thrown away the better part of himself—his great inclination for the low, namely: if he would but leave off scents for his handkerchief, and oil for his hair; if he would but confine himself to three clean shirts a week, a couple of coats in a year, a beef-steak and onions for dinner, his beaker a pewter-pot, his carpet a sanded floor, how much might be made of him even yet! An occasional pot of porter too much, a black eye in a tap-room fight with a carman—a night in the watch-house—or a surfeit produced by Welsh rabbit and gin and beer, might, perhaps, redden his fair face and swell his slim waist; but the *mental* improvement which he would acquire under such treatment—the intellectual pluck and vigour which he would attain by the stout diet

—the manly sports and conversation in which he would join at the Coal-Hole, or the Widow's are far better for him than the feeble fribble at the Reform Club (not inaptly called the "Hole in the Wall"), the windy French dinners, which, as we take it, are his usual fare; and above all, the unwholesome Radical garbage which forms the political food of himself and his clique in the House of Commons.'

When at twenty-one, Thackeray wrote a long article (which, as has been said, has never been reprinted) on Lytton's *Godolphin*, the view he held then on novels of that kind were the same as those he expressed in later days.

'The cliché of literary puffers,' so he began, 'that infest this reading metropolis, has been so often lashed, and apparently with so little effect, that we fear it is incorrigible, and although, in noticing the novel of *Godolphin*, these puffers, and their threadbare artifices are again forced upon us, we shall simply observe that in no instance have they prostituted their talents for twaddle more than in crying up in the extravagant manner they have done the work in question. The author, be he, who he may, is, or has been, a puffer by profession he knows the system, and calculates its effects, for instance aware that there is no legitimate interest whatever in his story, he endeavours, in his preface, to engender a spurious one. We intend to do strict justice upon this "extraordinary production", and we shall therefore adopt the fair course of letting the writer occasionally speak for himself. Well, then, as to this spurious interest.

'Should any of the idlers who have leisure to waste on trifles attempt to pry into so unimportant a secret, as the name of the individual whose humble task it has been, from a memoir to construct a romance, their ingenuity will be exercised in vain: that secret, of consequence to none but himself (in this we fully agree), "he trusts and believes he shall carry to a grave" (we sincerely hope

he will) "which, amidst a sea of infirmities and care, smiles upon him, near and welcome—the haven of repose."

'If the unhappy gentleman really be hurrying "to that bourn whence no traveller returns", we think that he would have been better employed in reading "THE BOOK", than in writing one after the fashion of *Godolphin*. The chief fault we find in it is, that in no one instance does it accomplish the object, or objects, it proposes to have in view.

'Its main tendency is to show the influence exercised by the great world over the more intellectual, the more daring, and the more imaginative of its inmates of either sex.

'Now we cannot discover, though we have carefully studied the intellectual, the daring, and the imaginative, characters portrayed, that "the great world" exercised any influence over them whatever. High life, for such we presume is meant by "the great world", is answerable for giving birth to, and parentally fostering many follies and vices, but to embody as many as can well be conceived in a given number of characters, and because those characters are made to move in this sphere, declare that they are necessarily produced by such a station, is about as absurd as it would be to say, because the author of *Godolphin*, has scribbled, and still scribbles, to the imminent danger of his publisher's shelves, which have to bear the unsaleable weight of the "raw material", that, *constat*, he is to be answerable for all the trumpery that shall be coined by greater blockheads than himself, when such are found.'

Thackeray then proceeds to examine, one by one, the principal characters of this 'extraordinary production', and humorously 'laments' that lack of space prevents the printing of 'the narrative'.

John Vernon, who had been a public character of high repute, on his deathbed, laden with bankruptcy and care



and shame and a broken heart, makes his daughter, Constance, vow to avenge him:

'Now, reader, the daughter to whom all this raving was addressed, was a child of thirteen years of age, a proper person truly to trust with the execution of a diabolical revenge. The malady, with which this neglected Sheridan was afflicted, must assuredly have affected his brain, for such drivellings could only have fallen from the lips of a madman. As for his parental injunction, "to lie, cringe, fawn, think vice not vice," with his other commands touching her prostituting herself in marriage, we shall say nothing, only begging the reader to remember the circumstance, in case the young lady should not in the end, turn out what she ought.'

But Godolphin himself must not be ignored.

'Here we leave our heroine to introduce our hero, with whom we are made acquainted at the ripe age of fifteen. The accomplishments of this youthful genius are in perfect keeping with those of Miss Constance, and we felt assured, before he had opened his mouth twice, that they were born for each other—"Percy," said his father, "remember that it is to-morrow you will return to school." Percy pouts a little, and wants to go to London, on a visit to Saville. The old gentleman is naturally surprised at his impertinence, and is about to give him a set-down, when "Father," interrupted Percy, in a cool and *nonchalant* tone, as he folded his arms and looked straight and shrewdly on the paternal face. "Father, let us understand each other. My schooling is, I suppose, rather an expensive affair?" His father, instead of ringing the bell for a horsewhip, condescends to an argument; the result, however, is that Percy is to return to school. This he does, and is shortly expelled for slapping his master's face. This "singular boy" lets himself out of the window at night, and directs his course towards town. On his way, he falls into the company of strolling players, among the

stars of whom is Fanny Millinger, and with her he falls in love! What might have been the consequences Heaven knows, had not her acting *pleased him into respecting her*; but, fortunately, after this extraordinary triumph of genius his passion cooled, he quits his wandering Venus, though she liberally offers to give him half her earnings if he will stay,—having emptied his pockets of his money, and wheedled him out of his watch.

‘Godolphin goes to Italy, and there meets Voltkman, an astrologer, and his young daughter, Lucilla, who falls in love with him, and insists on living with him.

‘Presently Godolphin falls in love with Constance.

“And now Constance, without knowing it” (as Julia laid her hand on Juan) “had clung closer and closer to Godolphin. His hand at first—now his arm—supported her” (also without knowing it, of course), “and at length, by an irresistible and maddening impulse, he clasped her to his breast, and whispered, in a voice which was heard by her even amidst the thunder of the giant water, ‘Here, here, my early, my only love, I feel, in spite of myself, that I never utterly, fully adored you until now.’”

Now for Thackeray’s conclusion:

‘Our author has here got rid of “the great world”, and substituted the *actual* world, but we don’t think it worth while to quarrel with him about it. “The great world” means nothing more than a small portion of society, in whom are centred wealth, rank, and fashion, and it was this particular class of persons whose influence on peculiar temperaments were to be shown. “The *actual* world” means a world purely in speculation, but one in which we really live and act, so that every man’s station in life, be it high or low, is his “*actual* world”. Godolphin’s *actual* world, then, was “the great world”, and it is its impudently asserted influence upon him that we deny. We will take a review of his career in a few words: he escaped from school, with a half-finished educa-

tion, and associates with vagabonds of various sorts; at sixteen years of age he goes abroad, and we are positive he continues to do pretty much the same, his only reputable acquaintance being Voltkman; he comes to England, but for a short time, returns to Italy, and seduces his friend's daughter! What had the world to do with this? He gets tired of, and forsakes her! Did the great world prompt him to this villainy?

'He marries and brings his bride home, neglects her, herds again with fashionable "legs" and "cast-off actresses", and falls not from temptation or example into evil, but from an innate love of vice.

'This is a fair unexaggerated statement, and again we ask, in the name of common justice and common sense, what had "the great world to do with the matter?"

'The fact was that Godolphin was a bad-hearted, bad-principled man, cold, selfish, and calculating, without the only passion which ever weakens our abhorrence of guilt—ambition. And with this, we throw from us *Godolphin*, trusting that, in the execution of our duty, we may never have to dissect a subject so valueless again.'

It is good to be able to bring down the curtain on a pleasant note. In later days Thackeray regretted the heat with which he had written of Lytton. 'That delicious parody, "George de Barnwell", in the *Prize Novelists*, was good fooling, and written without malice; but certainly he was rather hard on his brother-novelist in some of his reviews. A mutual friend wrote to Lytton:

'I saw Thackeray at Folkestone. He spoke of you a great deal, and said he would have given worlds to have burnt some of his writings, especially the lampoons written in his youth. He much wished to see you and express his contrition. His admiration as expressed to me was boundless; also his regret to have given vent to his youthful jealousy, etc. I tell you all this because I feel certain he meant me to repeat it.'

Later Thackeray himself wrote to Lytton:

‘Looking over some American reprints of my books, I find one containing a preface written by me when I was in New York, in which are the following words:

“There is an opportunity of being satiric or sentimental. The careless papers written at an early period, and never seen since the printer’s boy carried them away, are brought back and laid at the father’s door; and he cannot, if he would, disown his own children. Why were some of the little brats brought out of their obscurity? I own to a feeling of anything but pleasure in reviewing some of these misshapen juvenile creatures, which the publisher has disinterred and resuscitated. There are two performances especially (among the critical and works of the erudite Mr. Yellowplush) which I am sorry to see reproduced, and I ask pardon of the author of *The Caxtons* for a lampoon, which I know he himself has forgiven, and which I wish I could recall. I had never seen that eminent writer but once in public when this satire was penned, and wonder at the recklessness of the young man who could fancy such personality was harmless jocularly, and never calculated that it might give pain.”

‘I don’t know whether you were ever made aware of this cry of “Peccavi”: but with the book in which it appears just fresh before me, I think it fair to write a line to acquaint with the existence of such an apology; and to assure of the author’s repentance for the past, and the present goodwill.’

# FRAGMENT OF A PROLOGUE

By T. S. ELIOT

ORESTES: You don't see them, you don't—but *I* see them: they are hunting me down, I must move on.—  
*Choeophoroi.*

Hence the soul cannot be possessed of the divine union, until it has divested itself of the love of created beings.—  
*St. John of the Cross.*

DUSTY. DORIS.

Dusty: How about Pereira?

Doris: What about Pereira?

I don't care.

Dusty: You don't care!

Who pays the rent?

Doris: Yes he pays the rent

Dusty: Well some men don't and some men do

Some men don't and you know who

Doris: You can have Pereira

Dusty: What about Pereira?

Doris: He's no gentleman, Pereira:

You can't trust him!

Dusty: Well that's true.

He's no gentleman if you can't trust him

And *if* you can't trust him—

Then you never know what he's going to do.

Doris: No it wouldn't do to be too nice to Pereira.

Dusty: Now Sam's a gentleman through and through.

Doris: I like Sam

Dusty: I like Sam

Yes and Sam's a nice boy too.

He's a funny fellow

*Doris:* He *is* a funny fellow

He's like a fellow once I knew.

*He* could make you laugh.

*Dusty:* Sam can make you laugh:

Sam's all right

*Doris:* But Pereira won't do.

We can't have Pereira

*Dusty:* Well what you going to do?

*Telephone:* Ting a ling ling

Ting a ling ling

*Dusty:* That's Pereira

*Doris:* Yes that's Pereira

*Dusty:* Well what you going to do?

*Telephone:* Ting a ling ling

Ting a ling ling

*Dusty:* That's Pereira

*Doris:* Well can't you stop that horrible noise?

Pick up the receiver

*Dusty:* What'll I say!

*Doris:* Say what you like: say I'm ill,

Say I broke my leg on the stairs

Say we've had a fire

*Dusty:* Hello Hello are you there?

Yes this is Miss Dorrance's *flat*—

Oh Mr. Pereira is that you? how do you do!

Oh I'm *so* sorry. I *am* so sorry

But Doris came home with a terrible chill

No, just a chill

Oh I *think* it's only a chill

Yes indeed I hope so too—

Well I *hope* we shan't have to call a doctor

Doris just hates having a doctor

She says will you ring up on Monday

She hopes to be all right on Monday

I say do you mind if I ring off now  
She's got her feet in mustard and water  
I said I'm giving her mustard and water  
Allright, Monday you'll phone through.  
Yes I'll tell her. Good bye. Gooooood bye.  
I'm sure, that's very kind of *you*.

Ah-h-h

*Doris:* Now I'm going to cut the cards for to-night.  
Oh guess what the first is

*Dusty:* First is. What is?

*Doris:* The King of Clubs

*Dusty:* That's Pereira

*Doris:* It might be Sweeney

*Dusty:* It's Pereira

*Doris:* It might *just* as well be Sweeney

*Dusty:* Well anyway it's very queer.

*Doris:* Here's the four of diamonds, what's that mean?

*Dusty (reading):* 'A small sum of money, or a present  
Of wearing apparel, or a party'.  
That's queer too.

*Doris:* Here's the three. What's that mean?

*Dusty:* 'News of an absent friend'.—Pereira!

*Doris:* The Queen of Hearts!—Mrs. Porter!

*Dusty:* Or it might be you

*Doris:* Or it might be you  
We're all hearts. You can't be sure.

It just depends on what comes next.

You've got to *think* when you read the cards,

It's not a thing that anyone can do.

*Dusty:* Yes I know you've a touch with the cards  
What comes next?

*Doris:* What comes next. It's the six.

*Dusty:* 'A quarrel. An estrangement. Separation of  
friends'.

*Doris:* Here's the two of spades.

*Dusty:* The *two* of spades!

THAT'S THE COFFIN!!

*Doris:* THAT'S THE COFFIN?

Oh good heavens what'll I do?

Just before a party too!

*Dusty:* Well it needn't be yours, it may mean a friend.

*Doris:* No it's mine. I'm sure it's mine.

I dreamt of weddings all last night.

Yes it's mine. I know it's mine.

Oh good heavens what'll I do.

Well I'm not going to draw any more,

You cut for luck. You cut for luck.

It might break the spell. You cut for luck.

*Dusty:* The Knave of Spades.

*Doris:* That'll be Snow

*Dusty:* Or it might be Swarts

*Doris:* Or it might be Snow

*Dusty:* It's a funny thing how I draw court cards—

*Doris:* There's a lot in the way you pick them up

*Dusty:* There's an awful lot in the way you feel

*Doris:* Sometimes they'll tell you nothing at all

*Dusty:* You've got to know what you want to ask them

*Doris:* You've got to know what you want to know

*Dusty:* It's no use asking them too much

*Doris:* It's no use asking more than once

*Dusty:* Sometimes they're no use at all.

*Doris:* I'd like to know about that coffin.

*Dusty:* Well I never! What did I tell you?

Wasn't I saying I always draw court cards?

The Knave of Hearts!

*(Whistle outside of the window.)*

Well I never!

What a coincidence! Cards are queer!

*(Whistle again.)*

*Doris:* Is that Sam?

*Dusty:* Of course it's Sam!

*Doris:* Of course, the Knave of Hearts *is* Sam!



*Dusty (leaning out of the window):* Hello Sam!

*Wauchope:* Hello dear!

How many's up there?

*Dusty:* Nobody's up here

How many's down there?

*Wauchope:* Four of us here.

Wait till I put the car round the corner

We'll be right up

*Dusty:* All right, come up.

*Wauchope:* We'll be right up.

*Dusty (to Doris):* Cards are queer.

*Doris:* I'd like to know about that coffin.

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK

KNOCK

KNOCK

KNOCK

DORIS. DUSTY. WAUCHOPE. HORSFALL. KLIPSTEIN.  
KRUMPACKER.

*Wauchope:* Hello Doris! Hello Dusty! How do you do!  
How come? how come? will you permit me—  
I think you girls both know Captain Hors-  
fall—

We want you to meet two friends of ours,

American gentlemen here on business.

Meet Mr. Klipstein. Meet Mr. Krumpacker.

*Klipstein:* How do you do

*Krumpacker:* How do you do

*Klipstein:* I'm very pleased to make your acquaintance

*Krumpacker:* Extremely pleased to become acquainted

*Klipstein:* Sam—I should say Loot Sam Wauchope

*Krumpacker:* Of the Canadian Expeditionary Force—

*Klipstein:* The Loot has told us a lot about you.

*Krumpacker:* We were all in the war together

Klip and me and the Cap and Sam.

- Klipstein:* Yes we did our bit, as you folks say,  
I'll tell the world we got the Hun on the run
- Krumpacker:* What about that poker game? eh what Sam?  
What about that poker game in Bordeaux?  
Yes Miss Dorrance you get Sam  
To tell about that poker game in Bordeaux.
- Dusty:* Do you know London well, Mr. Krumpacker?
- Klipstein:* No we never been here before
- Krumpacker:* We hit this town last night for the first time
- Klipstein:* And I certainly hope it won't be the last time.
- Doris:* You like London, Mr. Klipstein?
- Krumpacker:* Do we like London? do we like London!  
Do we like London!! Eh what Klip?
- Klipstein:* Say, Miss—er—uh London's swell.  
We like London fine.
- Krumpacker:* Perfectly slick.
- Dusty:* Why don't you come and live here then?
- Klipstein:* Well, no, Miss—er—you haven't quite got it  
(I'm afraid I didn't quite catch your name—  
But I'm very pleased to meet you all the  
same)—  
London's a little too gay for us  
Yes I'll say a little too gay.
- Krumpacker:* Yes London's a little too gay for us  
Don't think I mean anything *coarse*—  
But I'm afraid we couldn't stand the pace.  
What about it Klip?
- Klipstein:* You said it, Krum.  
London's a slick place, London's a swell place,  
London's a fine place to come on a visit—
- Krumpacker:* Specially when you got a real live Britisher  
A guy like Sam to show you around.  
Sam of course is at *home* in London,  
And he's promised to show us around.

(To be continued.)

# MUSIC

## THE INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL AT ZURICH

THE sudden and lamented death of Louis Fleury has carried off not only the first of flute-players but also one of the first men to prove that, even after a European war, musicians could be without malice and music heal the wounds made by soldiers and diplomatists. At Salzburg in 1922, at that haphazard festival arranged by the younger Viennese composers, Fleury came on to the platform and sat down with two Germans, a Turk, three Dutchmen, two Austrians, and an Englishwoman, to perform a piece of music by a British composer of American parentage. It was the first important occasion on which musicians from formerly hostile countries had joined in the performance of a piece of music; and some of those present, feeling that this was an achievement which deserved perpetuation, took steps towards a more systematic organization of the movement. The result was the foundation of the International Society for Contemporary Music.

The subsequent history of the Society will be familiar to readers of the *NEW CRITERION*. The first festivals, devoted purely to chamber music, were held at Salzburg. Then, in 1924, the Czecho-Slovak section, backed up by their enlightened government, offered the Society the chance of holding an orchestral festival at Prague as part of the musical celebrations of the centenary of the birth of Smetana. This festival, organized as it was on the most generous scale with the co-operation of one of the finest orchestras in Europe, at once established the Society on a secure footing. Several new countries joined, and the publicity given to the festival both in Europe and America did much to convince musicians of all nationalities that the International Society was an institution with a serious

sense of its responsibilities and one whose festivals were to be considered as giving authoritative international recognition to the composers whose works were performed. Chamber music again had its turn in August, 1924, but the local conditions had changed. In 1922 the young composers had gone to Salzburg because they felt that Salzburg would bring them an audience; in 1924 it was the International Festival alone which brought an audience to Salzburg. In spite of the affection which the Society feels for its birthplace, it knows now that it is independent of it; and it welcomed cordially the suggestion of the Italian Section that the chamber-festival of 1925 should be held at Venice, while the Czecho-Slovak invitation to Prague was repeated for the orchestral festival in the spring.

This year the meeting was held at Zurich, the hosts being the members of the Swiss Section, while for 1927 the Society has accepted the invitation of the City of Frankfurt. The chairman is still Mr. E. J. Dent, who is unanimously re-elected year after year—indeed it is difficult to imagine what would have happened to the Society with a president who had less tact and discretion, or less command of foreign languages, to say nothing of the personal friendship of so many composers and executants.

The Zürich festival was admirably organized, both musically and socially, while Swiss hospitality enabled musicians from about twenty different countries to make or renew one another's acquaintance under conditions which are unknown to the ordinary visitor to Switzerland. The programmes included both chamber and orchestral music with the addition of several notable choral works, the performance of which was made possible by the existence of an admirable body of Swiss singers, the Zürich Mixed Choir. Some musicians of modern tendencies are apt to look down on choral music; and in Latin countries where (with the exception of Catalonia) there is little or no

tradition of choral singing, such music is seldom understood either by audiences or composers. It is true that the programmes of English provincial festivals are never very enterprising; but this may be accounted for, in part at any rate, by the fact that a choral composition is generally less interesting to hear than to take part in. Even Mendelssohn's *Elijah* is entertaining to the people singing in the chorus, while a work like Beethoven's *Mass in D* is an unforgettable experience for a singer—an experience, it seems, which is necessary if a hearer is really to appreciate the music; for those who shake their heads over Beethoven's *Mass* are precisely those who have never actually taken part in it themselves. The same may be said of some of Parry's works. *Blest Pair of Sirens* will always remain one of the noblest pieces of choral music for those who have ever sung in it. Elgar on the other hand, though still the favourite composer of provincial festivals, becomes almost unbearable after the numerous rehearsals which are entailed by a work like *The Apostles* or *The Dream of Gerontius*. The *Devils* come to loathe their chorus about the 'low-born clods of brute earth who aspire to become gods—gods!' and 'the lords by right' who are 'chucked down' by Cardinal Newman and 'the sheer might of a tyrant's frown'; while the banality of the music at certain solemn moments is enough to make the tired listener leave the hall and the tired chorus-singer feel uncomfortable in the region of the solar plexus.

A new choral work, then, has to be of more than usual interest if it is to hold the attention of listeners as well as singers, and of those performed this year at Zürich, three out of four fully justified the international recognition which the festival gave them. The exception was *Le Miroir de Jésus* by the late André Caplet, for female voices, strings and harp, the intimate mystical feeling of which would have been more suitable to a college of the Sacred Heart than to an international festival of contemporary

music. The perpetual employment of 'added' notes, left no single clean sound from beginning to end, while the deliberate monotony of colour, however justified by mystical considerations, was from a musical point of view not altogether a success. Very different were the *Psalmus Hungaricus* of Zoltán Kodály and Honegger's *King David* sung together at a concert of the Zürich Mixed Choir at the beginning of the festival. Kodály's psalm, though not aggressively modern, is a noble and inspiring work, full of colour and the striking rhythms of Hungarian poetry, the words being a sixteenth century gloss on the 55th Psalm, set to music with the passionate conviction of a sensitive man conscious that his country is the least understood and most ill-used in modern Europe. Honegger's Symphonic Psalm, '*King David*', is a concert-arrangement of a drama by René Morax, first performed at the Art Theatre at Mézières near Lausanne in 1921. Sung as an oratorio, as it was at Zürich, it would make a welcome change at a provincial English festival; and though somewhat uneven in style, it has great moments, and shows that it is just as possible for a composer to write an inspiring Hallelujah chorus as it is to give a symphonic impression of a railway engine. The most surprising choral work of the festival was the *Litany* of Felix Petyrek, an Austrian composer domiciled at Abbazia. It is set for mixed chorus, children's chorus, trumpets, harps and percussion, and contains much extremely original and effective writing for the voices, while the accompaniment is so subdued as to be a background for the singers rather than a support. Here for once was a choral work which one was glad to be able to listen to in peace without having the anxiety of singing in it oneself! The Zürich singers, however, both big and little, were beyond praise for their purity of intonation, and their certainty in 'leads' which might well have frightened even the most experienced choral singer.

Of the new orchestral works none made a more favourable impression than Mr. W. T. Walton's overture, *Portsmouth Point*, which has since been played in London as an interlude during a performance by the Russian Ballet. In London it puzzled the critics; but at Zürich, under the direction of Dr. Volkmar Andreae it proved to be a brilliant piece of modern orchestration, and a work full of life and movement. Something is happening, and happening vigorously, the whole time, while the fat tunes lurking somewhere in the background suggest that Mr. Walton's sailors have been ashore at a certain port in the Mediterranean. Casella's new *Partita* for pianoforte and orchestra shows that gifted and versatile composer in a new light, and is the most important work which the neo-classic movement in modern music has produced. The composer's sense of form is unerring; so is his sense of effect, and in no work performed during the festival did the musical thought find more complete and adequate expression. The neo-classic, or 'back to Bach' movement is not of course, the only movement of the kind in contemporary music. Pizzetti looks back still further, to the freer rhythms of the Polyphonic and Madrigal period, while Vaughan Williams is so steeped in the essentially English and Anglo-Saxon type of folk-song as to be a Piers Plowman among modern composers, and his music strikes one with the rude freshness of English alliterative verse.

The two concerts devoted to chamber music included, amongst other meritorious compositions, Schönberg's quintet for wind instruments which, it must be confessed, was a disillusion and a disappointment. It never seemed to get moving or to escape from a slow 'common' time, and in spite of its complete absence of tonality it had an irresistible suggestion of parts of *Parsifal* gone wrong. The *Five Pieces for Orchestra* by Schönberg's pupil, Anton Webern, fugitive breaths of music lasting only a few

seconds each, were far more interesting and original. Myaskowsky's pianoforte sonata was finely played at a day's notice by Herr Walter Giesecking, who had been responsible for the solo part in Casella's *Partita*. It showed the surprising fact that, advanced as Soviet Russia is in the drama and other forms of intellectual activity, in music it is much behind the achievements of a Russian exile like Stravinsky. The Sonata had suggestions of Scriabin and Glazounov, and was full of the passionate, romantic 'junk' which most composers have thrown overboard in the process which was described not long ago in this place as the 'dehumanization' of music. The concerto for violin and wind instruments by Kurt Weill, a pupil of Busoni, was a passionately serious work with something of the nobility of utterance of the master as well as his constructive ability—one of the new works performed at the festival which one would most like to hear again. Mention should also be made of P. O. Ferroud's *Foules* for orchestra, and an interesting string trio by Anton Geiser. On the Sunday morning there were two excellent performances in the Swiss Marionette Theatre of *Master Peter's Puppet Show*, the delightful one-act opera by Manuel de Falla, who was present and received a great ovation. Nothing throughout the entire festival, pleased the audience as much as this. It is an extraordinarily skilful piece of writing for a small orchestra, while Don Quixote's attack on the Moorish puppets (which he takes for real Moors) and his justification of it as proof of 'what gain to the world are Knights Errant' has a nobility of thought and expression, for all its irony, which is unsurpassed in contemporary music.

The Zürich festival has shewn once more that deliberate silliness, *blague*, and the kind of music which belongs to the period of the Armistice have now no place in a contemporary programme. They were already out of date in 1924, as the Salzburg festival of that year proved, and



have no interest at gatherings at which musicians from different countries meet to hear the latest developments of music performed under the best possible conditions.

J. B. TREND

# GERMAN CHRONICLE

IT is well known—and M. Henri Massis, in his article, 'The Defence of the West', has again called attention to it—how helplessly the youth of Germany after the war faced the question of the spiritual course they were to follow. Many expected salvation to come from the East, and catchwords about the old tired 'intellectual West with its burden of tradition' found many willing ears. People believed in the rise, in the necessity, of a completely fresh spiritual world, for the building of which no old European material could be used, and they took their yearning for it as a proof of its advent. This movement (it was not the only one, any more than the youth of Germany is the whole of Germany) bore the marks of a flight, a flight into self-forgetfulness, into a vague hope in the endless possibilities of the turn of destiny. The spiritual position seemed then for the first time to reveal the deepest meaning of the expression, the revaluation of all values. There was nihilism in it, but nihilism without talent; scepticism, but scepticism bound up with naïveté; above all, it was the need for a new religious foundation for the new outlook on life. Dostoievsky, the poet of 'apocalyptic Russia', seemed to many to be the authoritative world prophet of the time, the herald of the new humanity. The conception of destiny acquired a new form: it became more Eastern, more passive, more mystical: it became derationalised. The desire was for something the exact opposite of what Mr. T. S. Eliot, in the January number, characterised as a striving after 'a higher and clearer conception of Reason, and a more severe and serene control of the emotions by Reason'. Reason itself was declared to be incompetent, because the radicals and the heralds of the new humanity scented in it a convention handed down from the eighteenth century.

They remained in the erroneous belief that the conception of reason is fixed and unchangeable.

This turning to the East, however exaggeratedly and noisily it expressed itself, opened up a series of problems which affected not only Germany but the whole of Europe. Even in France there was an intense preoccupation with the idea (compare, e.g., the special number of the *Cahiers du mois*, 'Les Appels de l'Orient', the writings of René Guénon, etc.). For Germany there seemed for a time to be a danger in this feverish Orientalisation, but the anti-toxins were being prepared simultaneously. Convinced Europeans raised their voices in warning. Ernst Robert Curtius was the first to recognise the danger of the situation. An excellent little book by Wilhelm Worringer, *Deutsche Jugend und Oestlicher Geist*, was a call for an *examen de conscience* by giving new life to the idea of the 'Romance tradition of Germany'. He appealed to the Protestant tendency which is innate in the German, and pointed out the danger threatened by Oriental formlessness. As an historian of art, he was doubly entitled to make this plea. Lately there appeared an incisive pamphlet against the Russian spirit under the pseudonym Sir Galahad, and entitled *Idiotenführer durch die russische Literatur* (Albert Langen, Munich). The book contains penetrating observations such as only passionate hate could inspire. The question for the author is not what spiritual values are penetrating from Russia into our inner world, what should we reject as indigestible and alien to us. For him Russia is exclusively the 'country of without'—without a religion of its own, without mythology, without architecture, without plastic art, without an alphabet of its own, without tragedy, and above all without form. How then could a 'Russian mission' to Europe be successful? The work of Dostoevsky contains a glorification of soul perversity; it is full of resentment against every heroic principle, against all

strong, free, noble men; there is in it a complete shifting of accent downwards—as a positive compensation the hysterical postulate of ‘universal love’ is inadequate for Europeans. This is roughly the reasoning of the author.

Sir Galahad’s book does not aim at objective justice; it is, however, an interesting document for the times. It shows that in Germany the halo of light from the East has been cracked. This halo illuminates Russia in particular; the Far East, Buddhism, Confucianism, etc., has never been a serious danger for the German mind as a whole, at the most for a snob or two who have decided to erect their private view of life on the handmade paper of their edition of Buddha. These people have removed themselves from Europe, and Europe does not feel the loss. This kind of solution remains unauthoritative. The problem of the European spirit is fundamentally a problem of action; our impulse after truth is, by its nature, subject to different laws from those of the Asiatic impulse, even where the two may agree in direction. It was the idea of Europe as a *function*—as Paul Valéry outlined it—as a system which strives after its own perfecting, that gave rise to the book, *Die Anfänge der europäischen Philosophie*, by Ernst Howald (C. H. Beck, Munich), in which, among the systems from Thales to Plato, the path is followed which remains in the main decisive for later European thought. In it a Hellenist with extraordinary penetration describes the peculiar nature of the creation of symbols in philosophy and religion, the birth of the European conception of truth as the distinctive sign of our will to knowledge. The recovery of the German spirit from the transient fever of anti-humanism and despair of all culture (to which it was never completely a victim) is shown even in Count Keyserling’s latest book, *Die neuentstehende Welt* (Otto Reichl, Darmstadt). There the versatile philosopher, who coquetted with the East, but builds his hopes entirely on the West, writes as

follows: 'It is the task of Europe to foster the new determining type of culture. . . . To-day spiritual light is no longer to be expected from the East. Here and here only can the new "sense" as a historic force come to birth. . . . There are two empirical reasons as well for this: in the first place the technico-intellectual side is completely developed and therefore is no longer a problem; to that extent the body is already ripe for the new soul, which is not true of Russia, and still less of the Far East. But further, the ecumenical position is richer in potentials than at any other period in human history; its leaders must, therefore, embody in themselves, make themselves capable of enduring more potentials than any man of an earlier age, and the European is to-day the only man who is sufficiently developed for the multiplicity and antagonistic nature of these potentials. Europe is, therefore, the Palestine of the world that is coming to birth.'

M. Massis, in the article already mentioned, states that Græco-Latin culture is not 'Germany's own proper possession, the foundation of her humanity'. It is a mere acquisition of the philologists. The German cannot be penetrated by it 'to the point of becoming identified with it'. We live in the twentieth century, and Græco-Latin culture cannot any longer be the only basis of humanity. The conception of humanity is no longer fulfilled by, or derived solely from, the content of classical antiquity, but simultaneously with this by and from the vital essence and spirit of the forces which have since then been instrumental in shaping culture. In its finest period, the German mind was in close touch with Hellenism, in closer touch than with Latin culture. Homer was to us what Virgil was and still is to the French. Goethe's words, *Jeder sei auf seine Art ein Grieche—aber er sei's*,<sup>1</sup> indicate a fundamental factor in the German mind. And in our best

<sup>1</sup> 'Let everyone be a Greek in his own way—but let him be a Greek.'

minds, the idea of humanity and the adherence to the West lives to-day as strongly as ever. It lives in Thomas Mann's speech, *Von deutscher Republik* (published in the volume of essays, *Bemühungen*: S. Fischer, Berlin), where the youth of Germany are adjured to maintain their allegiance to this highest ideal; further, it pervades the whole of the work of Hofmannsthal; without it the figure of Stefan Georg is incomprehensible. Schiller's line: *Und die Sonne Homers, siehe! sie lächelt auch uns*,<sup>1</sup> receives fresh confirmation from poets of rank and worth. Rilke's *Sonette an Orpheus* (Insel Verlag, Leipzig) is touched by a ray of this sun; Rudolf Borchardt's magnificent translations of the Old Ionic *Götterlieder*, hymns ascribed to Homer, of the great troubadors, and of the Divine Comedy (all published by the Bremer Press, Munich), show that Græco-Latin culture is just as much a legitimate possession of the German as of any other man. The same is proved by Rudolf Alexander Schröder's excellent renderings of the Odyssey, the Iliad and parts of the works of Cicero. These are not the mere hobbies of philologists and 'outsiders', but the deep inner concerns of the creative minds in our contemporary literature. Friedrich Gundolf's evocation of the form of Cæsar (*Cäsar: Geschichte seines Ruhms*: Georg Bondi, Berlin) points in the same direction. There is then a spiritual Germany which is convinced that it belongs to the domain of the former *imperium romanum*, and that its ancestors had their place within the *limes*. On this soil the feeling of cultural continuity is so firmly stamped that it cannot be washed away by any new current of radicalism and hostility to tradition. Conservative powers in the best sense are not in danger in Germany; but it seems to me that it is not only permissible but necessary to have an interpretation of the 'West' which includes the province of German culture, for the further we advance the slighter will inter-European oppositions

<sup>1</sup> 'And the sun of Homer, see, it smiles on us too!'

become, and the more imperative it will be to regard the polarities in the different cultures as necessities under greater laws, and to recognise the common element in the great tendencies. The differences between Romance and Germanic culture, on the exact definition of which so much spirit and energy have been expended, become of less importance when the opposition between East and West, Europe and Asia, enter into the discussion. Contrasted with this opposite pair of ideas, Germany undoubtedly belongs to the West, in spite of Rathenau, Hesse and Oswald Spengler!

I do not mean to assert that German culture is a homogeneous unity, and that it is everywhere ranked in opposition to the East. The spirited literary historian, Josef Nadler, in his book, *Die Berliner Romantik* (Erich Reiss, Berlin), has explained the inner division of the German spirit as a process of mutual completion and fructifying of each other by two strata of culture: the South-West of Germany in its development through a thousand years of Germano-Roman union has produced humanism and classicism; in the North-East, a district originally Slav colonised by the Germans in the thirteenth century, romanticism sprang from this Germano-Slav blend. But romanticism flourished later; although it has geographically another home, it is spiritually the offspring of humanism and classicism, and would be unthinkable without these two extremely Western sources. It is in this way that the Eastern elements in the German mind brought about a further development in these Western stocks, while they were assimilated and humanised by entering the Western German classic cultural consciousness. They were not rejected out of hand, but drawn into a synthesis. And this striving after a synthesis seems to me to be an essentially European characteristic, which at present is seeking fulfilment beyond all national and racial barriers. The Western mind can preserve

itself only if it is continuously and at all times creative. The role of Germany, as a participator in this common creative will of Europe, will obtain the consideration which its importance for the whole deserves. On the subject of the present direction of the intellectual forces in the domain of German culture, a good German and distinguished writer, Ernst Robert Curtius, writes: 'If we ask ourselves what is to-day the essential feature of German spiritual production as compared with that of foreign countries, the most obvious is the widespread movement towards a new synthetic and universal inquiry into culture. All modes of the 'objective spirit', to use Hegel's phrase, are in Germany to-day the subject of an investigation that searches out structural forms from the historical material. Out of this great search for truth a new conception of universal history is being formed. The order of development of the historical factors, the types of thought and the modes of life, the morphology of cultures, are being revealed to the understanding by pragmatism inquiry and ideal synthesis. From this great work distributed over many generations we may expect a rich harvest.'

MAX RYCHNER



# NEW YORK CHRONICLE

THERE is an attitude of mind familiar to observers of American intellectuals which Europeans ought to understand; I find it so often undermining my own judgment that it would be unfair for me not to state it. It is the tendency to misprise the purely American thing, the provincial or the local, as a method of glorifying whatever in our arts has the pretention of being universal. For example, although I am keenly interested in the natural development of those cadences and rhythms which, much more than slang and individual words, are making the American language, I can find nothing attractive in the nasalities, the hard utterances, or the drawls which give us, in various parts of the country, the American accent. We are hardly ever pleased by the literary or social success of anyone or anything because of American 'quaintness'; to ourselves we are neither picturesque nor quaint, and except for those who are trying to isolate America artistically as well as in politics, we wish to be loved as equals. I can see no impropriety in this attitude, and am actually concerned with its results. The popular and journalistic success of Mr. Sinclair Lewis's novels was remarkable; yet it remained for the English critics to hail them as exceptionally fine works of art in the satiric vein; to us they were rather pedestrian reporting only interesting for their temperamental dislike of our commercial middle class, a dislike which we had passed through perhaps ten years earlier, and had lacked the acumen or the energy to record, probably because we felt the whole thing had been done by the French Romanticists and had achieved perfection in *Madame Bovary*. The point does not need to be laboured, but it does need to be understood, and it has been made beautifully clear in a story by Henry James, the story of a woman whose progress in English society is

threatened by the unwanted appearance of an extremely Western Yankee brother; the story, in effect, of her feelings about his far greater success.

We are all of us snobs about Anglo-European success. One sensible explanation of this is that we do not ourselves respect our critics, and there seems little reason why we should. I am thinking now of the critics who are instantly effective. Mr. Irving Babbitt, Mr. Paul Elmer More have their effect on the public through other critics, but only one man inspired by them has acquired a position of authority in our press, Mr. Stuart P. Sherman. Our influential critics are of the ordinary journalistic type which makes no distinction between prose rhythms and the rhythms of verse in prose, or combines sentimentality with ignorance (Barrie's *Mary Rose* is the greatest flight of fancy since *The Tempest* and *The Green Hat* is one of the most glamorous love stories ever told) or exploits wilful and invincible ignorance (Professor William Lyon Phelps deplores the serious consideration of Ulysses adding that he has never read a word of the book, but that someone read him a few paragraphs during an intermission at a theatre). Mr. Mencken, whose interest was never pure, has apparently gone into the business of assigning political or social themes to our novelists with the promise that they will make great books; Mr. Van Wyck Brooks, holding more passionately than any other of our critics to a profound theory of the relation of the artist to the times, was never deeply interested in contemporaries and, since the disappearance of *The Freeman*, has published very little; the critics of a generation ago who, working largely through newspapers, broke down certain barriers which had hampered the artist, or proclaimed the advent of new creative forces (particularly in poetry), have almost all ceased to write criticism.

Mr. Theodore Dreiser's work has always been a

stumbling block to me, chiefly because I find him so hard to read. (Mr. Arnold Bennett's praise of Dreiser years ago had much to do with his ultimate success). The jargon in which he writes is among the flattest and ugliest perversions of English; it is not journalese, it is not colloquial, for both of these have the merit of vividness, which he lacks. It is a monotone without cadence, a dull naming of objects, sensations, actions, without any effort to render any of them. His new book, *An American Tragedy*, did not remain long a best-seller, I believe, but it had its prominence for three reasons: it is Dreiser's first work of fiction in ten years—the ten years since he was recognised as a forerunner of our contemporary writers of novels; it was issued in the first instance in two volumes; it was sold for a magnificent price to the movies. It tells for the most part a fairly direct story, but when we have had an entire boyhood and adolescence added to a coil of circumstances which lead to a fully explained murder, we have to read, sunk in the centre of the book, an infinitely detailed account of the trial which results in the electrocution of the central character. The whole book is thrown out of focus by the inclusion of all the testimony, none of which adds to our essential knowledge of events or of motives, and this section is so emphasised that it gives its tone to the whole, leaving it a dreary masterpiece of reporting, of insignificant naturalism.

Yet in a specific way Dreiser is the most important of our novelists because he is the type and other, better, novelists are still accidents or sports. His virtues are great. He had from the beginning an honesty which, two decades ago, was almost unknown in our fiction, a sort of heavy courage; he lacks smartness, slickness, glibness—all the defects of our tailor-made novelists. And he is, without aggressiveness, free from European influences. Precisely these influences would have taught him the rudiments of form and of verbal style; yet I count their

absence a virtue because Dreiser is more important as an influence himself rather than as a novelist. For the younger writer he has meant independence, above all things. I recall Mr. Sherwood Anderson saying once that Dreiser was like an ox which had broken a hole in a brick wall, and that all the younger men were walking through that gap, hardly knowing that it had not always been there. The wall, of course, was the social veto on actual life as the subject of fiction. It is also true that Dreiser indicated to Americans that they need not spend their time in imitation of European models, accepted directly or through James and Mrs. Wharton. Dreiser has character; his temper would never excite me, but it would interest me more if he had any way of actually expressing the vast material he holds in his hand. As it is, his books are like the individuals one meets, in whose presence all vitality is drained, the forceful bores who break down resistance, so that even the effort to escape is too much.

Mr. John Dos Passos, who caused a flutter in patriotic circles when he published our first intelligent novel about the war, *Three Soldiers*, has written a novel in which, for the first time, the influence of James Joyce is properly felt. There are a few of Joyce's telescoped words, a few imitative phrasings; but for the most part the influence is on the form of the novel, on its structure—and here no imitation is to be found. It is called *Manhattan Transfer* and its intention is clearly to present not a picture of life in New York, but an intense and significant rendering of its more dramatic and poignant aspects. Its triumph is in the presentation of New York's chaos without ever falling into chaos itself. Group after group of characters are shown, as independent and as inter-related as the tines of two forks set into each other, and the method recalls the interweaving of the objective world with the stream of consciousness in *Ulysses*, a fire engine drawn by white

horses pound their way through the pages like the cortège of the Lieutenant-Governor. But there is no sense of imitation in *Manhattan Transfer*; there is definitely the sense that Mr. Dos Passos has created his own form for his own materials.

Mr. Sinclair Lewis's critical remarks about his own, or other people's work, are not important, but it was interesting to have him hail *Manhattan Transfer* as a greater novel than *Ulysses*. It is not, because Mr. Dos Passos is not as intelligent as Mr. Joyce and at times allows his work to be choked with comparatively alien ideas which are so little amalgamated that they seem to exist independently and not as made parts of his fiction; nor is he so sure an artist—there are serious defects of proportion in the structure which is essentially admirable. But with this book he becomes important in the sense that Mr. Scott Fitzgerald (of whose *Great Gatsby* I wrote in my last chronicle) is important, as one who has shown definite power in the creation of fiction, whose precise direction cannot easily be foretold, and whose future is certain, to be of interest.

I recommend to readers who are interested in America two books concerned with the almost immediate past: *The Mauve Decade*, by Thomas Beer, and *Our Times*, by Mark Sullivan of which the first volume, *The Turn of the Century*, alone has been issued. I think Mr. Sullivan's book, the work of one of our most experienced journalists, will be readable without a glossary; it has enough of politics to make it history in the narrow sense, and has, in addition, an enormous amount of well-manipulated material about the life of the common man during the first years of this century and just before. It is critical only in the process of selection, achieves a distinguished impartiality, or limits itself to statements of fact. What women wore, what dogs were favorite, what people thought of motor cars and their future, what puzzles were solved,

what triumphs of invention were recorded, are all set down, and together provide an essential background for understanding the common man in America to-day. Mr. Beer's work is all criticism of the Nineties, and the reader who is offended by the mannerisms of his sentences will perhaps think that the work of the critic and novelist is not as well written as the work of the reporter. To me these mannerisms are amusing; they are the not entirely fused parts of an individual style, and they actually add to the vividness, the gusto of Mr. Beer's narrative. He deals with literary people, with the Irish in politics, the intellectual aspirations of the middle West, the moral movements which have their present counterparts and results in prohibitions and censorships and tyrannies. The 'The Nineties of Chap-books, art-leather, bandits and characters' are, one gathers, responsible for the young men of to-day with all their *malaises*, and the undertone of resentment is a defect in Mr. Beer's work; yet it is this same resentment which gives the book a specific point of view and makes it valuable as a study in our contemporary mind.

These two books are excellent examples; there are others, varying from very good to contemptible, all dealing with periods or characters of our past. I suspect that the quality and the success of Mr. Lytton Strachey's work had a great deal to do with our present vogue for biography, for a number of our authors work under orders from publishers and if painters are 'in' will do a painter, or if fiction is regnant will try their hand at that. There are, also, deeper reasons why we should be thrown back upon ourselves and try to discover our ancestors, reasons which a student of our present politics will understand. In any case, some good material has been brought together, and some excellent books have been written. The distinguished editor, Albert Jay Nock, has written a *Jefferson*; but for the most part it is not our great men so much as queer

types, originals, characters that appear. Mr. Werner's *Barnum* and *Brigham Young* are to be followed by a study of *Tammany Hall*, the dominant political junta of New York City; the bandit Jesse James, the mythical Paul Bunyan (the strong-man and liar of the lumber camps) have each had a book. Each issue of *The American Mercury* contains at least one study of a character: Grover Cleveland, Ward McAllister (arbiter of fashion two decades ago and creator of the phrase 'the Four Hundred' as a description of the social elect in New York), or Colonel Mann who is supposed to have blackmailed that same society. There is also promised a biography of Anthony Comstock, the first director of the Society for the Prevention of Vice (read, literary censorship). Almost all of the biographies I have read recently are either in the Strachey vein or call in open psychoanalysis to aid them; Mr. Joseph Wood Krutch's work on Poe has been fairly well abused for being in the latter class; I have not yet read it. There is danger in both methods, and especially in the first; for Strachey badly done is usually an irritating collection of curiosities held together by smart remarks, and is far more misleading than any official biography can be.

In what has gone before I have tried to note a few books, and a few movements in thought, which could be of interest to the European, even if only to the European who is himself interested in America. I have not room, nor courage, to dispose summarily of the other arts; but there is one artist who, being a Frenchman by birth and partly, I believe, by training, is an American of the first importance. He is the sculptor, Gaston Lachaise. Most of our sculpture has the sort of serenity which is easy to attain if there is no deep thought or feeling to communicate, the serenity of coma; some of it has a sense of chaos because a deep feeling has been faultily communicated. Lachaise, almost alone, imposes order on chaos,

creates beauty, and the serenity of his works is the visible manifestation of his control over profound emotions. There is a preliminary pleasure to be had in appreciating his craftsman's mastery over his material; he works in all stones and metals and woods, and his surfaces and his masses give a tactile pleasure. Some of his work is instantly pleasing and is, I think, gaining a precarious popularity: peacocks in stone, dolphins in burnished copper, and grave heads of women; there exist several groups of portraits of exceptional vigour; and finally there are his masterpieces, figures of archaic simplicity without a trace of archaism, ponderable figures of amazing proportions, impressive and beautiful.

I have suggested in these pages that the proper mode for utilizing our native popular music might prove to be the ballet, not the opera. Such a ballet, written by John Alden Carpenter, was presented at the Metropolitan Opera House last winter. Mr. Carpenter is a composer more familiar with modern European music than with jazz, but he took the right road and *Skyscrapers*, although it was danced by the Metropolitan's regular troupe, trained by a professional revue producer, was successful. Nevertheless two jazz operas are announced. To the name of George Antheil, familiar to readers of this journal and soon to be familiar in New York where a symphony of his will be produced by a fairly conventional orchestra, I would add the name of Aaron Copland; both of them seem to me to understand better than their professional jazz confrères, what jazz can be made into.

GILBERT SELDES



# THE BALLET

IT is true that *Les Noces*, impressive as it was, was not, artistically, as successful as it might have been, and that *Jack-in-the-Box*, the only one of the new ballets which left one with a really vivid impression of having seen a work of art, lasted little more than ten minutes. Yet for six weeks this summer His Majesty's was, one may say, the only theatre in London where one was sure of finding delight for the eyes and the ears and the intelligence every evening. The opera, even in a season that was better than any held since the war was mostly dull. There were the odd passages here and there through *The Ring* that appeal—the first and last scenes of *Das Rheingold*, the opening of the second act of *Die Walküre*, the appearance of Waltraute in *Götterdämmerung*—and there was a fair performance of *Don Giovanni*. But the world now goes to opera expecting a certain amount of boredom. At the ballet *longeurs* are so rare as to make one rather more surprised than bored when they do occur. There were some in *La Pastorale*, but even *La Pastorale* was not wholly without interest. If its scenery was indifferent and its choreography unsignifying the music had several tasteful passages, and above all there was Doubrovskaya, glamorously idiotic, in the part of the heroine. Nor were the artistic blasphemies of *Romeo and Juliet* disgusting in the sense that for instance M. Sacha Guitry's *Mozart* was disgusting. The Guitry play treated the composer of *Don Giovanni* as a world's sweetheart and—though with the best will in the world towards Mdlle. Printemps—even those who are not over devout Mozartians found the play offensive. In the *Romeo and Juliet* ballet Shakespeare's play was merely the background against which the drama of an entirely different set of characters was worked out. But of course one does not expect positive offences against art in the performances

of the Diaghileff Company. On the contrary one is disappointed when a passage however slight that may not be regarded seriously as art occurs—the pantomimed entr'acte in *Romeo and Juliet* for instance. A company that can go on producing such ballets as *Les Noces*, *Jack-in-the-Box*, and *Zephyr and Flora* not to speak of *La Boutique Fantasque*, *The Three Cornered Hat* and *Parade* may be fairly easily forgiven for occasionally falling short of its own highest achievement.

One of the advantages of having the ballet at a theatre of its own was that the musical performances during the entr'actes which could not be given at the Coliseum could be resumed. Some of those at His Majesty's were admirable, notably Ravel's *Alborado del Gracioso*, which was played as perfectly as one could expect to hear it played in London by Mr. Goosens' orchestra. And, musically, each of the new ballets was interesting in its own way, Satie's and Stravinsky's more so than M. Auric's or Mr. Lambert's of course. The Satie evening in particular was enough in itself to justify the season. It included a performance of *Parade*, and *Parade* is everything that a ballet ought to be. Its décor is the most impressively mad of all Picasso's perfectly deliberated madnesses and the Satie music, the Massine choreography and the Cocteau theme were in perfect harmony. The performance too was very good, although it made one realise more vividly than one had realised before that M. Woizikovsky still has a limitation. Within the limits set by the choreographer *Parade* should be all crazy and Woizikovsky was quaint rather than crazy. Otherwise the season was a triumph for him. He is now the most accomplished all round artist in the company. His presence on the stage is a guarantee of absolute precision of movement and really intelligent miming. In *The Three Cornered Hat* he excites his audience much in the way one imagines Paganini excited our grandparents with *The Devil's Trill*, by sheer technical

mastery. And in addition he acts the pride of the offended miller with the understanding of that particular quality that one might expect from a Polish artist. At the other end of the scale it is impossible to imagine *Les Matelots* without him in the part of the comic sailor, and in *Cimarosiana* again he adapts himself to a different type of part with complete success. As for M. Lifar, though he is outstanding only in one part, that is as Boreas in *Zephyr and Flora*, one could not but admire his industry. When he was not doing principal parts he was dancing in the corps de ballet—and incidentally paying more attention to his business than some of its regular members, two or three of whom need a word of advice from the maître de ballet as to how to comport themselves when they happen to have little to do or are not interested in what they are doing. At some performances of *Les Noces* it was not only a question of their being perfunctory. Their conversations with each other which were perfectly obvious were a distraction as well as a discourtesy to the audience. Such behaviour is only to be taken for granted from some lazy and wayward favourite of the London theatre-going public, one does not expect it in any member of the Diaghileff company.

The corps de ballet's lack of interest in *Les Noces* was, however, understandable. The things they had to do, though difficult were not very definite. The choreography was tame. Except in the last scene it lacked force. It had invention and it was always graceful; but to match the two aggressive tunes and Stravinsky's aggressive variations on them a more emphatic choreographic scheme was necessary. The music was dramatic, the choreography lyrical, the one masculine the other feminine. If Massine with his passion for over-emphasis and Nijinska whose reticence sometimes hides her ingenuity—as here and in *Les Facheux*—could have collaborated, *Les Noces* might have been a more obvious success. But the whole

idea of a ballet on the subject of nuptials in general rather than nuptials in particular was probably a mistake; a bride and bridegroom who took no part in the proceedings and were mere symbols round which the corps de ballet performed a series of ritualistic dances might as well have been represented by lay figures. They were, no doubt, intended for universal types, but in the theatre as in all art the universal has to be reached through the particular. This bride and bridegroom were characterless, the least interesting pair for whom a stage bedroom scene was ever designed. They were the absent Hamlet. Had they been represented by lay figures it would have concentrated attention more definitely on the actual dances and shown the necessity for a more forceful scheme of choreography. But it would be better to have individualised them.

The choreography of the other new ballets calls for little notice. That of *Romeo and Juliet* was the most successful. The theme was slight and Mdme. Nijinska's mastery in slight things is absolute. It was a brilliant idea on somebody's part—the authorship of the text was not disclosed on the programme—to treat the great British public to peeps behind the scene at the ballet, but the idea was treated with a little too much discretion. Some of the décor was against *Romeo and Juliet* also. Senor Miro's designs did not lack taste, but Herr Ernst's suggested post-war German stunt, and from the point of view of decoration, the shade of yellow chosen for the chitons of the ladies of the ballet killed the opening scene. The choreography of *La Pastorale* was mostly padding. It was by M. Balanchin who was also responsible for the facetious entr'acte of *Romeo and Juliet* and for *Jack-in-the-Box*. One had hoped for more from him after *Barabau*. *Jack-in-the-Box* opened brilliantly with Idzikovsky—in perhaps the most beautiful costume he has ever worn—performing all the incredible feats of dancing that he alone can do,

performing them delightedly and delightfully. It was wise of M. Balanchin to introduce them, for his own invention soon began to give out. However, the Satie music and the Derain décor were so superb that the thinness of the choreography was scarcely noticeable.

An announcement was made early in the season that *Le Chant du Rossignol* would be revived, but it did not materialise. Still, we had *Parade*, and in the second last week of the season *Zephyr and Flora* was revived and proved to be an even more beautiful ballet than one had thought. M. Tcherkas still seems insignificant in the part of *Zephyr*, but Lifar and Nikitina are admirable, the music is substantial, and though he grows dangerously Parisian, Braque almost ranks with Picasso and Jardin as a designer of décors. There were many other things that make the season pleasant to remember, the return of Karsavina—who in the graceful pas de deux with Lifar to the pretty tune in Scene I of *Romeo and Juliet* danced as beautifully as she has ever danced; Lopokova's touching performance as the dancer in *Petrushka*—one so tends to think of her as the incorrigible soubrette; Doubrovskaya's establishment of herself as a dancer of odd but unquestionable talent. There are rumours of a season at Covent Garden during the winter. May it mark the return of Nemtchinova and Dolin—even of Massine himself. They will all be wanted there.

L. ST. SENAN

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*To the Editor*

SIR,

In the articles, 'Defence of the West', M. Henri Massis reveals himself as a refreshing polemist. He is obviously concerned with the problem with which I hope all men of good-will, Western or Eastern, are concerned, the problem of arousing the present generation from the shallow torpor, the facile abundance, the relativistic indifference, which seem to represent more and more the attitude of most people in face of the mechanistic chaos which is our chief legacy from the war. M. Massis is, on the contrary, passionately interested in ideas. He is no optimist concerning the future, no self-satisfied relativist comfortably thinking that nothing is much worth bothering about, and, I hope, no academic mind upholding the old heresy that tradition is something to be handed on intact, without growth or alteration in any particular. No, M. Massis is none of these things. He is obviously worried and appalled at the condition in which the war has left mankind, and is seeking for some issue. So far, so good.

The chief danger, however, that M. Massis sees for the West is in my opinion a false one. M. Massis defines this danger as Asiaticism. I should be more inclined to say that the danger comes from the appalling number of superstitions which have sprung up and captured the West, not only since the Reformation, but still more since the advent of materialistic science in the late eighteenth century. There is first of all the superstition that newspapers are an educative force—a superstition to which we almost all pay tribute. Behind that is the superstition of unlimited mechanical 'progress'. Beyond that again is the essentially Darwinian superstition of the survival of the fittest—a pure apologia for unlimited industrial exploitation and competition. And beyond all these is the greatest superstition of all, the superstition that political democracy leads to unlimited progress, the belief that to vote and pay taxes is to be free, while to take part in the common effort and danger and to help

create the common spiritual heritage, is to be a slave. All these heresies were discovered and first exploited in the West; and if the East is infected by them, it is our own fault.

However, let us try to define what M. Massis means by Asiaticism. He himself seems to have no clear conception of it. Thus he declares on one page that the chief danger to Occidental civilisation comes from the rise of Russian Bolshevism and its attendant turning-back to the East. It seems strange that a historically-trained mind, such as I take M. Massis to possess, should confuse Marxian communism, which is a purely Western doctrine, with the much older atavistic tendency of the Russian peasant to drift back into a Mongolian nomad—a tendency so little appreciated by the leading Bolsheviks themselves, from Lenin onwards, that they have spent most of their time in striving, by force or subvention, not only to Westernise the peasant, but to bring some part of Europe into a frame of mind more friendly to them. On another page M. Massis declares that the chief danger to the West is the extraordinary interest in Asiatic culture and religion which has arisen in Germany since the war. This is a more important argument, which must be dealt with in a moment. The last danger that M. Massis sees emerging from the East is the rise of individualist anarchy, which he declares to be purely Oriental in origin. He opposes to it what he calls the root ideas of the West—personality, unity, stability, authority, continuity. As a matter of fact, the States which have politically, socially, and religiously most faithfully and persistently carried out M. Massis' programme of root ideas, are China, Japan, and Egypt. As for Western Europe, it has had no common racial, religious, or political faith or organisation since the failure of the Holy Roman Empire and the coming of the Reformation. It has accepted instead the political anarchy of Nationalism, which was no less responsible for the last war than it was for all the preceding ones.

To return to the German side of M. Massis' argument. It is quite true that Germany took no part in the creation of Græco-Latin culture. It is quite true that since the war there has been an intensive and growing interest in Oriental art, literature, religion, philosophy, on the part of the German people. It is quite true that Count Keyserling (who is half a Slav) aims at becoming a Yogi, and that Oswald Spengler's book on the Decline of the West is in

reality an argument against Hellenism and the brief episode of Renaissance humanism. Why is it that these events so agitate M. Massis that he sees in them a danger to civilisation itself?

It seems to me that M. Massis is deeply infected with the Mediterraneanism of M. Charles Maurras and other Frenchmen. This disease, wherever it appears, displays the same symptoms: the symptom of supposing that the Greeks were alone enlightened, that Græco-Roman culture is the only classic culture, that Italy and France are the great centres of culture, that every other race and nation, Eastern or Western, is *per se* barbarian. One does not know what to do with this faith which has been dignified with the expressive name of humanism. To suppose that neither Egypt, China, Crete, India at the time of Asoka or the Mogul Emperors, England or Germany, are capable of classicism or humanism, is surely to go rather far! To crown these arguments with a remark of Chesterton: 'There is in Asia a great evil spirit who is trying to melt everything in the same crucible, and who represents everything bathing in an immense pool,' is surely to achieve not clarity but muddle-headed stupidity! Matthew Arnold himself, who was a classicist and a humanist, interested himself not only in Greece, but in Celtic poetry and even in Scandinavian mythology, as one of his poems will testify. And to a Hellene of any century after the fifth, a Viking skald would have appeared to be the last remove in barbarism. Besides, one would really like to see a Sudra bathing in the same pool as a Brahmin, or the Emperor of Japan melted in the same crucible as the meanest of his rice cultivators.

Let us by all means learn, as true scholastics, to distinguish the substance of classicism from the accidents of Hellenism. Classicism rests upon an objective view of the world, upon a settled social order, upon a unified religion and ethic, upon a graded order of duties and privileges within the State, upon social, racial, and religious unity. How much of this was present in Greece up to the time of Alexander and of Alexander's teacher, Aristotle? Little, if at all. Before that date, Greece achieved no permanent polity. Athens and Sparta and the Theban confederation were at perpetual loggerheads, and when one of these failed in its jealous maintenance of individuality, the Mede was usually called in. There was no State religion, no central cult except for the four-year festival at Olympia, which was only half-heartedly kept up. Of the great men of Athens



itself, Æschylus, Phidias, Euripides, Socrates, were attacked for impiety to the local cult. Herodotus, the only man who suspected that Egypt had an older and firmer tradition than Athens possessed, was an Asiatic Greek. Plato's rejection of practical politics, and his love for Tolstoyan Utopias, are perfectly well known. But not only Plato, but the whole of Greek philosophy up to Aristotle, is impregnated with a profound scepticism in regard to the beliefs of the Greeks themselves. And when Greece, thanks to Philip of Macedon, Aristotle and Alexander, did achieve its unity, it was a unity orientated towards Africa and Asia.

What has M. Massis to say to these facts? Are we, simply for the sake of the bastard Mediterraneanism of M. Maurras and Maurice Barrès, to suppose not only that the Greeks were entirely akin to the Romans, but to go further and to assume, as these Mediterraneans always assume, that there is nothing to be said for the Song of Roland, the Nibelung Saga, the Arthurian cycle, or the Celtic hero-myths, as essentially classic material? Undoubtedly, the two supreme teachers of the West were Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas. But neither of these were specifically humanist. Humanism began as a revival of Platonic doctrine in Florence of the fifteenth century, and the leading humanists—men like Colet and Erasmus—prepared the way for the Reformation.

It seems to me far more important that Western thought should learn to draw a clear distinction between scholasticism and humanism, than to go on worrying ourselves about the increasing interest in Asiatic art and literature displayed in Germany and elsewhere. To me, the West and the East are two complementary poles necessarily interacting upon each other. But to those who, like M. Massis, honestly disagree, I would say that if it is necessary for the European spirit to make some headway against growing Asiaticism—and I would add also, Americanism—it is no longer possible to do so solely on the basis of a narrow Græco-Latin culture. There must be a great synthesis of all that is Western European in thought and in feeling, upon the intellectual as well as upon the political plane, if only to fight 'the stupid greed for material power that has diverted the West from its true mind', and to this Germany must have much to contribute. I cannot share the view that Leibniz, Goethe, Hölderlin, Nietzsche, or Spengler, are inferior as writers or thinkers to such men as Chesterton or Charles Maurras.

Finally, in justice to an art critic and a scholar of different race and tradition to myself, may I say that I have examined with some care the French translation of Ananda Coomaraswamy's *Dance of Siva*, and am unable to find the alleged quotation from Viscount Borio that M. Massis gives as appearing in its pages? I suspect him of reading some Nationalist French newspaper's review, rather than the book itself.

I remain,

Yours obediently,

JOHN GOULD FLETCHER

*To the Editor*

SIR,

I do not know if a Quarterly prints letters. If not would you communicate this to Mr. H. R. who so kindly reviews my *Milton* in the April number of *The New Criterion*. It concerns *Paradise Lost*, 11, 1, 702-4, in which place he seems to think I may be right in taking the reading 'found out' of the Second Edition as meaning 'melted out', and supports that reading on metrical grounds. The more I have considered it the more I find it difficult to believe that 'found' could be used as a past of 'found', i.e. 'melt'. There is no analogy. Moreover in Book XI, 11, 565-6, Milton writes:

Two massy clods of Iron and Brass  
Had *melted* (whether *found* where casual fire  
Had vested woods, etc.)

As a friend has said to me, would Milton have risked the ambiguity if he also used 'found' as 'melted'? It remains a puzzle why and how the charge came to be made, and what my reviewer says of the metre is just and interesting.

Yours truly,

H. J. C. GRIERSON

# BOOKS OF THE QUARTER

*Reason and Romanticism.* Essays in Literary Criticism. By Herbert Read. (Faber & Gwyer.) 7s. 6d. net.  
*Messages.* Par Ramon Fernandez. (1re serie.) (Gallimard, Paris.)

The intelligent and sensitive critic who discussed Mr. Read's book in the *Times' Literary Supplement* (leading article, July 8th, 1926), begins his article by remarking that 'the comparative quiescence of the creative spirit in our literature of recent years has found a certain compensation in the increased activity of the critical'. This antithesis between the 'creative' and the 'critical' spirits in literature, between 'creative' and 'critical' periods, had some validity or utility in the last century, when 'literature' was still composed in accepted forms, of poetry, of prose, of the novel; when the writers of verse, prose or the novel could assume for themselves a position respectable or disreputable (it is now much the same thing) in a respectable or disreputable world (according to the way in which you looked at it); when accordingly the 'critic' existed, had a position in 'literature'. But at the present time, when we have begun to suspect that 'literature' depends for its existence, even its subsistence, upon other things the existence of which we now doubt; when one of our most conspicuous *litterateurs* can exclaim: *la litterature est impossible. Il faut en sortir*; when it appears that the existence and the concept of literature depends upon our answer to other problems, the distinction between the 'critic' and the 'creator' is not a very useful one. The significance of the term critic has varied indefinitely: in our time the most vigorous critical minds are philosophical minds, are, in short, creative of values.

Mr. Read and M. Fernandez provide an excellent example of this invalidation of the ancient classification. They are of the same generation, of the same order of culture; their education is as nearly the same as that of men of different race and nationality can be; and they are occupied with similar material. Both books are collections of reprinted essays: and both volumes have a unity of purpose hitherto

uncommon in volumes of collected essays. Both have rewritten and improved their essays, under the impulse of this unity of purpose. Both were primarily students of literature, and animated by the desire to find a meaning and justification for literature. Mr. Read has the advantage of being European and English; M. Fernandez that of being European and American (he was born in Mexico). Both, instead of taking for granted the place and function of literature—and therefore taking for granted a whole universe—are occupied with the inquiry into this function, and therefore with the inquiry into the whole moral world, fundamentally, with entities and values. And they represent, finally, in my opinion, two divergent directions which the human spirit can take.

Both are occupied with what M. Fernandez calls the *problème de hiérarchie*. Let us start from the novel, in which both writers are interested, and from the particular point—a capital point for every contemporary mind—on which we find them most closely in agreement: their judgment of the work of Marcel Proust. I will take a sentence which Mr. Read, in his book, quotes from the book of M. Fernandez, and quotes obviously with warm approval:

‘Les objections que soulève l’œuvre de Proust, considérée comme analyse intégrale du cœur, comme révélatrice du fond de notre nature, peuvent être à mon avis réduites à deux essentielles: elle n’édifie point une hiérarchie des valeurs, et elle ne manifeste, de son début à sa conclusion, aucun progrès spirituel.’<sup>1</sup>

This sentence in itself is enough to show the penetration, the seriousness, and the novelty of M. Fernandez’ criticism. And as, from this point of agreement—the rejection of Proust (and by Mr. Read, of Joyce also, with whom Fernandez is not concerned) because of what M. Fernandez notifies as *l’absence de l’élément moral chez Proust*—as from this point the divergence begins, and becomes more and more manifest, we have, from these two writers, almost incorrigible testimony to the actual lack of value of Proust, or more exactly, to his value simply as a milestone, as a point of demarcation between a generation for whom the dissolution of value had in itself a positive value, and the generation for which the recognition of

<sup>1</sup>Fernandez, op. cit. p. 147; Read, op. cit. p. 220.

value is of utmost importance, a generation which is beginning to turn its attention to an athleticism, a *training*, of the soul as severe and ascetic as the training of the body of a runner.

There are two sharp distinctions to be drawn: first, that between 'this generation' and the last, between the generation which accepts moral problems and that which accepted only æsthetic or economic or psychological problems—and this is the distinction which assimilates Mr. Read and M. Fernandez; and second, the distinction between two different ways of dealing with the moral problem, and this is the distinction which separates Mr. Read and M. Fernandez. Both are, like St. Thomas and Nietzsche, theologians and moralists: But the directions in which Mr. Read and M. Fernandez seek their solution are opposite. M. Fernandez—who is, incidentally, a critic as well qualified to pronounce upon English literature as any English critic living—finds an ensample in Meredith; Mr. Read (who, of living English critics, is that one with the best understanding of *American* literature) in Henry James. The contrast is significant.

One of the finest, the most fecund, of the essays in M. Fernandez' volume, beside the essay on Proust, which is probably the most profound that has been written on that author, is his essay on Cardinal Newman, which originally appeared in *The Criterion*. M. Fernandez is, from a certain point of view, in closer sympathy with Newman than are many of Newman's Christian or literary apologists; he is in much closer sympathy with Newman in his place and *time*: with Newman, in fact—and it is a large part—in so far as Newman was *not* Christian or Catholic. He does not understand, perhaps, that in which Newman believed or tried to believe, but he understands, better than almost anyone, the *way in which* Newman believed or tried to believe it. And this is a capital difference: a different way of facing the 'moral' problem: Mr. Fernandez as a psychologist, Mr. Read as a metaphysician. Mr. Read is interested in St. Thomas Aquinas, because he is interested in metaphysical and logical truth; M. Fernandez is interested in Newman, because he is interested in *personality*. The difference between Read and Fernandez is a difference of focus, a difference of value: M. Fernandez is in a sense with Bergson, with the pragmatists, with those who have reached a certain degree of sophistication about 'the nature of truth': for Mr. Read, I imagine, there is, or there should be, no 'nature' of truth, there is only truth and error. Only, the contrast is more interesting,

between M. Fernandez and Mr. Read, than between M. Fernandez and those whom one assumes to be his natural antagonists in his own country, such as M. Massis and M. Maritain: for Mr. Read is a seeker after truth, whose researches we, as Anglo-Saxons, can follow understandingly; whereas M. Massis and M. Maritain are for us, as Anglo-Saxons, less cognate, because they have, for themselves and in a way which is not exactly ours, found truth.

In another type of critical review one would be able to discuss in detail the commentary—acute, profound and useful—of both authors on the authors whom they criticise: of M. Fernandez on Conrad, Stendhal and Meredith; of Mr. Read on Metaphysical Poetry, Comedy, the Brontes and Smollett. The temptation is very great, because both are, in the best sense, critics with international learning and international standards. One is tempted to commend, to French and Italian readers respectively, Mr. Read's observations on Diderot and on Guido Cavalcanti; to English readers, M. Fernandez' observations on Meredith, Newman and Conrad. But such comparisons and eulogies are likely to be made; what is not likely to be made is the contrast of two points of view, of which these two critics are important as types. Both, as I have said, are occupied with the constitution of a *moral* hierarchy in the modern world. M. Fernandez has a very high, very serious, and very difficult ideal of perfection, of the development and perfection of character: this ideal is nowhere better conceived than in his essay on *Le message de Meredith*. We may not accept M. Fernandez' estimate of Meredith; in fact, for a contemporary Anglo-Saxon reader, it is difficult to place Meredith so high as does M. Fernandez. I imagine that an intelligent Anglo-Saxon of the present day is inclined, like myself, to subscribe rather to a recent judgment of Meredith delivered by Mr. Leonard Woolf in *The Nation*; we are apt to perceive in Meredith's 'philosophy' just that which is temporary and tinsel. Nevertheless, we may admit that a foreign observer of the intelligence and the knowledge of England and English literature which cannot be denied to M. Fernandez, may even owing to a freshness of enthusiasm and naïveté, perceive qualities in Meredith which we neglect. The important, for my purpose, is that M. Fernandez finds in Meredith the assertion, even the demonstration, of a moral hierarchy from what I choose to call a *Cartesian* point of view. M. Fernandez likes

Meredith, and likes Newman, primarily for the same reason: that they build a moral hierarchy, but that they build it on the fact of *one's own existence* as the primary reality. And the question, the ultimate question—which I do not pretend to answer—is whether M. Fernandez, by positing *personality* as the ultimate, the fundamental reality in the universe, is really supporting or undermining that 'moral hierarchy' of which he, as well as Mr. Read, is so stout a champion.

The issue is really between those who, like M. Fernandez, and (if I understand right) Mr. Middleton Murry (otherwise very different from M. Fernandez) make *man the measure of all things*, and those who would find an extra-human measure. There are those who find this measure in a revealed religion, and those who, like Mr. Irving Babbitt and Mr. Read, look for it without pretending to have found it. In order to make man the measure of all things, M. Fernandez (I speak with reservation, pending the appearance of his expected Essay on Personality) has to assume a theory of reality which seems to be that of traditional psychology. The Mind seems to have for M. Fernandez a primary reality, psychology seems to take precedence over ontology. The Aristotelian commentator, Zabazella, observes:

'Dicamus quod intellectus seipsum intelligit, quatenus supra suam operationem reflectitur, dum alia intelligit, cogniscit enim se intelligere, proinde cogniscit se habere naturam talem, quae est apta fieri omnia. . . .'

and on the other hand we find in Watson's *Behaviourism* the following definition of personality:

'The sum of activities that can be discovered by actual observation of behaviour over a long enough term to give reliable information. In other words, personality is but the end product of our habit systems.'

The last definition is a little unsatisfactory, because one wonders what is a 'long enough' term to give 'reliable' information. There is, however, a certain agreement between Aristotle and Professor Watson (though Professor Watson may not think so): they are both, I think, in disaccord (by implication) with M. Fernandez. 'Personality' for both Aristotle and Professor Watson, refers to something outside.

This something outside is something for which Mr. Read is seeking, though not with complete success. Mr. Read is extremely honest, but not (it is extremely difficult) absolutely thoroughgoing. The critic of the *Times*, above mentioned, quotes the following passage from Mr. Read's book:

'The criticism of revealed religion has been operative not only on the empirical plane (which matters little) but also on the psychological plane. A religion like Christianity is built up largely on unconscious symbols: it finds its most powerful forces in subconscious processes like prayer, grace and faith. The effect of experimental science has been to destroy the unconsciousness of these symbols; it understands them and therefore equates them with conscious equivalents, which are no longer symbols and which on that account no longer compel the imagination.'

The critic of the *Times* has very cleverly fastened on one of Mr. Read's weakest points, and he observes, in passing, that the word 'subconscious' comes 'very strangely from the pen of a Thomist'. Mr. Read has here got himself into a muddle; but it is a muddle which testifies to his honesty (for we all get into a muddle somewhere, and the question is only *where*). Mr. Read stating that the empirical plane matters little (and I think he is wrong, because we cannot pass over so cavalierly the difference between 'planes') and implying that the psychological plane matters much, is throwing away a trick to M. Fernandez. Why should Mr. Read take the psychological plane so seriously; and what does he mean by unconscious symbols? If we are unconscious that a symbol is a symbol, then is it a symbol at all? and the moment we become conscious that it is a symbol, is it any longer a symbol? Mr. Read is on the verge of getting involved in the problem of Transsubstantiation. M. Fernandez is in danger of being an idealist without ideals; Mr. Read of being a realist without real objects. Both are struggling to find an objective truth; both are encumbered by the wipings of psychology. It is M. Fernandez who has arrived the nearer to a coherent theory: the great weakness of Mr. Read's book (if I have read these essays correctly) is that it represents a period of transition from psychology to metaphysics.

I believe myself in sympathy with both Mr. Read and M. Fernandez, and out of sympathy with the critic of the former in



the *Times*, in the conception of Intelligence. The Critic of the *Times* reproves in Mr. Read an 'uncritical frame of mind' for which 'verse that contains a maximum of explicit conceptual thought becomes superior to poetry that is mindful of its proper function and excellence—namely to pursue its rhythmic progress through an identity of image and idea.' This statement, about Mr. Read, is only intelligible to me on the assumption that his critic is incapable of appreciating the verses of Guido Cavalcanti which Mr. Read quotes (p. 50) and incapable of understanding the *Vita Nuova*. To a critic with such incapacities, Mr. Read must naturally seem to have a 'bias towards intellectualism'. 'Intellectualism' is a pejorative flung at Aristotle—and at St. Thomas—by those who have not taken the trouble to acquaint themselves with the sense of the texts. Similarly, the same critic, objecting simultaneously to Mr. Read and to St. Thomas, comments:

'To a modern mind the word 'intelligence' does not connote the faculty or act of 'simple apprehension of truth'. To a modern mind that act or faculty is 'intuition'. Whether we know as much as we ought to know about intuition may be doubted, but we shall not increase our knowledge by calling it intelligence.'

To this it may be replied, that we only complicate our ignorance by calling it 'intuition', and that for anyone who has devoted even a little attention to St. Thomas, or to Aristotle, the term 'intelligence' is adequate. *Intelligibilia se habent ad intellectum sicut sensibilia ad sensum*: they may be, and sometimes are, grasped immediately by inspection; and to insist on another faculty 'intuition' is merely to demand a more potent and thuriferous ju-ju. And I think that M. Fernandez, as well as Mr. Read, will be on the side of what we call 'the intelligence'.

T. S. ELIOT

*The Art of Being Ruled.* By Wyndham Lewis. London (Chatto and Windus), 1926. 18s. net.

*The Art of Thought.* By Graham Wallas. London (Jonathan Cape), 1926. 9s. net.

*Contemporary Political Thought in England.* By Lewis Rockow. London (Leonard Parsons), 1925. 15s. net.

*The History of Political Science from Plato to the Present.* By R. H. Murray. Cambridge (Heffer), 1926. 12s. 6d. net.

The danger to which criticism is by its nature susceptible is that of observing or surveying a subject without approaching it; and to approach a subject implies some positive power of a thesis or an attitude which persists independently of the particulars under review and serves as at least a provisional norm to which they may be referred. The act of reference in which criticism consists implies a prior position, and criticism is creative when it can fight hard for its ground, to discretion rather than to death, and then move on to a new hypothesis (*ὑπὸθεσις*).

Mr. Rockow's book, like many handbooks, has little to say *for* itself, and therefore little to say *of* the writers whom it discusses. We get the impression that it is rather unfair to put a number of political theories all together in a book, and we miss the continuity and coherence which even a mistaken thesis might supply. But the fault is not entirely with the author. Contemporary political thought is particularly prone to become a dead schematism, engines without energy, theories without principles; and that is at least one reason why this book resembles a collection of formulæ or an album of designs for the new cathedral. There is an embarrassment of philosophical concepts like sovereignty or liberty, which have taken some accent from every mouth that used them, and now begin to seem obsolete, and of labels whose concept has disappeared in the ether of loose thinking and exalted ideals. If we assume from the start the need for a redefinition of terms and a restriction of jargon, Mr. Rockow's survey reveals two desiderata in contemporary political thought, a return to the analytical method of Aristotle's politic, and a critique of society which has issue in principles rather than in theories, in a reasoned attitude rather than a philosophy set forth as a system.

The importance of the two writers whose names stand at the head of this review seems to be this, that while each is equally inno-

cent of a conclusion, Mr. Wallas is the author of a method and Mr. Lewis has rediscovered a principle which arise out of, and are therefore appropriate to, the present state of society. Nearly twenty years have elapsed since Mr. Wallas, in *Human Nature in Politics*, inaugurated the application of psychological doctrine to collective bodies, and sought to interpret the problems of government in the light of discoveries made thereby. It is scarcely a coincidence that the separation of psychology as a distinctive science should supervene upon an industrial civilisation; massed humanity offers an easy field for examination and the tension of a complicated, and by older standards an 'unnatural' life, reacts upon the nervous system of people who were set by tradition in an easy agricultural habit of life. But psychology, either of individuals or of groups, is valuable less as a science than as a method of diagnosis which supplies a precise terminology in place of the ill-defined notions like 'will' or 'desire', with which earlier philosophies were obliged to be content. The present book reminds us of an old dilemma in logic, whether the analytical judgment or the synthetic judgment is more fertile of knowledge; for a peculiarity, and probably a defect in most of Mr. Wallas' writings, which is more manifest in the *Art of Thought* than in the earlier books, is a certain absorption in psychological processes and a consequent failure to go beyond the results of his examination. In this book it is difficult not to be discomforted by the absence of a construction, and besides this there is a decline in vigour and penetration which brings the book rather too close to a popular psychology. But even if *The Art of Thought* be an enlightenment rather than a construction, it makes a real contribution to politics by its distinction between conscious, though not necessarily effective, thought, and an unconscious which is outside the field of deliberated effort. The art of thought, therefore, is an art of nursing the unconscious, a kind of opportunism which knows how to seize the fruits of the mind in due season. Mr. Wallas detects and describes four stages of control in a single achievement of thought, which he calls aptly enough preparation, incubation, illumination and verification, and of these only the first and the last are within the immediate direction of the thinker. Order and deliberation may prepare the field and gather the harvest but the crop depends upon an unseen parturition which is subject to soils and seasons and gives no hostages to fore-

thought. If you are to enjoy the fruition of your seed, you must watch the weather and be ready with stimulus or eradication as occasion may require. Psychology will do for the lore of the mind what meteorology does for the lore of the sky, providing a clear registration and a precise dialect for expressing its results; but thought comes out of the unconscious as crops out of the climate, and Mr. Wallas' handbook to thought-culture begins and ends with the admission of an incalculable.

It is perhaps too easy an admission. The principle on which Mr. Wallas' book is based is a belief in the sovereign competence of human reason. Man does think and knowledge is power even in the extension of individual thinking which we call the art of government. There is therefore an antinomy, which lies much deeper than the present book, between the belief in thought as the source of political authority and the indeterminate processes of suggestion and association which are revealed in its analysis. The one is a gospel of reason, the other an abandonment of it, and it is because it attempts to resolve this conflict by a compromise that the book exposes itself to the charge of an illuminating but indecisive liberalism.

Mr. Lewis, on the other hand, believes in thought, because he sees that in fact so little thinking is done; and his book, which is notable for its informality, its embitterment and its power, is really a restatement of the Aristotelian axiom of government, which has been assumed so often as to be generally ignored in political writings. In using an analysis of contemporary society as a vehicle for his statement, Mr. Lewis employs a method which differs only in its terms from that of Mr. Wallas. It is not here possible to discuss or even enumerate the phenomena of the great society which are examined with such honesty and penetration. The instalments of the author's thinking are arranged in compartments which do not appear to open upon one another until the passage of the whole is completed, and they deal each with a particular problem, the transition from the agricultural to the industrial mind, the nature and value of the family as a social unit, various inversions and perversions incident to an ill-adjusted society, and the convolutions of abstract socialism from its beautiful initiation at the hands of Rousseau to its unwitting metamorphosis in Russia and in Italy. The book becomes therefore an historical scrutiny of modern society, and

the author's rather detached discussions may be grouped under two concepts, which in logic appear incompatible, and which in their obstinate and inevitable debate are responsible for the chief dilemma which Europe is only now beginning to resolve. The first is both a condition of society and a state of mind in the members thereof, which may be called mechanization; the second, for which liberalism is a comprehensive label, is an attitude towards society and a doctrine for its salvation. Liberalism, which includes many species of socialism and almost all kinds of conservatism except pride and prejudice, is a late born child of the romantic movement with an odd talent for self-delusion and disguise. The essence of liberalism is that it abandons the sane classical dogma, known in its theological guise as original sin, and assumes in society an indigenous virtue which responds to careful nurture and will travel by comfortable stages to a remote perfection. The watchword of this movement was always 'progress', a conception which took an evolutionary turn from Darwinian biology and became under the influence of Bergson an easy political vitalism. Agricultural thinking passed from a politic into a policy; Rousseau was its patron saint and J. S. Mill the first great liberal socialist; in the world of practice it attained its most spectacular success in the early legislation of Gladstone, and its most finished philosophical expression at the hands of T. H. Green. The socialistic liberalism of the Fabians carried on the tradition with a vigour that lent it the aspect of novelty, and the doctrine has at the present time passed into the texture of nearly all English political thought.

Not the least irony of the nineteenth century was the honeyed friendship between the ill-suited pair that had stepped into history together; but perhaps its greatest error was not so much its failure to limit its technological obsession as a refusal to recognise mechanization values. Thus it repudiated the mechanical triumphs of its own devising in much the same way that it bred fast and took little heed of its offspring; and the result was a frightened attempt to force industrial facts into an agricultural interpretation. It is Mr. Lewis' just and frequent theme that there can be no satisfactory inquiry into modern society till this attempt is abandoned. We are nearer to an organisation than to an organism, and it were as futile to interpret it in terms of evolution as an attempt to mend an engine with manure or to govern with *boule* and *ecclesia* the closed system of the Roman empire.

We may therefore return with Mr. Lewis to Aristotle and reinterpret his axiom 'that some should rule and others be ruled is a thing not only necessary but expedient; from the hour of their birth some men are marked out for subjection, others for rule.' This unprepossessing truth has been unlucky in its articulation, and in the vocabulary of government we find a host of paradigms, socialism, monarchy, tyranny and the rest, but no word to denote the simplest of all political relationships. The idea of rule has been overlaid with religious or juristic accretions, and in toryism the bare concept has been too embarrassed with the hereditaments of possession and prestige for any reasoned utterance. Political realists like Theramenes (whose *patrios politeia* was a fascist slogan) or Frederick II of Prussia have expressed it in practice or by an occasional epigram, but its philosophical statement has generally taken colour from a particular context in history. As we may see in Mr. Murray's catalogue of political thinkers, the clearest statements are those of Aristotle and Machiavelli. But there are two parallel distinctions which run through Aristotle, a distinction of mentality between ruler and ruled which was natural (*φύσει*), and a distinction in status between servitude and personal freedom, which was a character of the Greek *polis*. This particular of society was perhaps as difficult for Aristotle to escape as 'capitalism' for modern writers; and it is the tendency in Aristotle to fuse the two distinctions that makes the phrase 'natural slave' so misleading a description of his true theory. In Machiavelli also, who approaches the idea of government from the other side, the concept is coloured by its instance, the diplomatic pharmacy of Cæsar Borgia turning his ruler into a tyrant; but there is no need on that account to join those who make Machiavellian a political synonym for mephistophelian.

Mr. Lewis reconsiders rule and finds that in the industrial society it has two instruments which we may call machinery and suggestion; and the rulers of a state are in fact those who control these twin forces. Take first the machinery of administration. Mr. Lewis does not deal directly with schemes of organisation, because his book is philosophical rather than technical, but in his criticism of writers like Proudhon and Sorel he shows with great lucidity that the bulk of socialist thought is concerned not with theories of right or the nature of democracy, but with schemes of *government*. Liberal

socialism has occupied itself more and more with the means and much less with the sanction of rule, and in leninism and fascism the movement completes its circle. But while socialism chased its other self the sense of discipline declined, and as a result Russia, Italy and Poland provide examples of crude dictatorships which are a bewildered attempt to redeem the chaos out of which they grew. Liberalism has thereby lost its aim, and discovered its need, and Mr. Lewis voices the increasing body of opinion which has travelled by the path of socialism towards a belief in order and authority.

The other instrument of rule is suggestion. It is the theory of industrial democracy that we think or at least will, for ourselves; and its irony that the democratic man has most of his thoughts as well as most of his beliefs arranged for him. He believes in fact anything that is suggested with sufficient psychological skill; and so long as it does not disturb his superficial independence the true is always the authoritative. Hence arises the superstitious reverence for the expert, which is in the Aristotelian sense a kind of servitude; and the 'average man' believes the people who say *it is so*, because life is easier that way, and they are glad enough, as Frederick once observed, to get someone to take on the ruling job. The power of suggestion is not merely evident in the tooth paste that shouts loudest in the underground railways, or in those who tell us that rubbers are resilient and teas are strong; it is the key also to a vast apparatus for standardizing thought by a uniformity of fodder which is not confined to the press, the platform and the crystal set, but imposes fashions in art and letters upon those who would credit themselves with an independent judgment. Stilted personality and robotine thinking break out in a crop of cults and crazes which are at once the protest against a servitude and an admission of it. Mr. Lewis examines with great skill this fungus of delusion—feminism, inversion, the aping of the child, the masculinisation of women, and the effeminisation of men, jazz bands, country cottages (with honeysuckle) and all manner of bastard faiths and flabby intuitions. Mr. Lewis does not miss either their value as emotional experience or their significance as symptoms. Their common character is an industrial romanticism which would escape from the framework of systems into an easy unreason; and in it one may detect the pangs of industrial adolescence and the reluctance of agricultural thinking to realise that it is obsolete. The most obvious

sign of this condition is called the revolutionary spirit; but Mr. Lewis would dissociate the revolutionary impulse which is intellectual enterprise from the many corrupt imitations which confuse the issue. It is when Mr. Lewis' examination is completed that his own faith becomes for a moment explicit. His book is primarily a plea for the political sovereignty of the intellect, authority which derives its sanction from the power to think and operates by the 'spiritual ascendancy of persuasion'. The corollary to this principle, which Mr. Lewis has the courage to face, is a distinction between creative thought which constitutes authority, and those ideas which are fit for 'vulgarisation' and may be of service for the governance of society. We arrive thus in a philosophy of aloofness and discretion—'politics of the intellect' is Mr. Lewis' name for it. Millennial politics it certainly is, but it is at least a saner brand of idealism than is frequently to be found.

W. A. THORPE

*A Call to Order.* By Jean Cocteau. Translated by Rollo H. Myers. (Faber & Gwyer.) 7s. 6d.

*Le Rappel à L'Ordre.* By Jean Cocteau. Stock.

*Plain-Chant.* By Jean Cocteau. Stock.

*Le Potomak.* By Jean Cocteau. Stock.

*Thomas L'Imposteur.* By Jean Cocteau. N.R.F.

*Le Grand Ecart.* By Jean Cocteau. Stock.

*L'Ange Heurtebise.* By Jean Cocteau. Stock.

*Lettre à Jacques Maritain.* By Jean Cocteau. Stock.

*Orphée.* By Jean Cocteau. Acted at the Théâtre des Arts.

The worst compliment one could pay M. Cocteau would be to take him solemnly, *ériger en dogme* any of his utterances, place him by any elaborate comparisons. 'Imaginez,' he writes to M. Maritain, 'qu'il me faut sans cesse me maintenir en l'air et m'exercer au vol.' He is Harlequin, brilliant, adaptable, acutely sensitive to atmosphere, and he chooses to perform upon the tight-rope. This is a very serious business indeed, especially if it is a tight-rope you yourself have made, since you are then doubly responsible for your life. Yet for our own satisfaction we may be permitted to examine M. Cocteau's rope, and see of what strands it is woven: it is certainly no steel hawser, passed by the Ministère des Mines as having a



high factor of safety so as to reassure the public; it will only reassure those who have ever tried to make a rope of their own.

There is an extraordinary consistency about M. Cocteau's fabric. 'Cette lettre [à Jacques Maritain] ferme une boucle qui commence avec *Le Coq et l'Arlequin*,' he prefaces, and that is perfectly true: were it not so easy to prophesy after the event, one would like to say that the *Lettre* was inevitable. For he has always been haunted by a desire for beauty, not the formal made beauty of acknowledged masterpieces—which for him too much resemble tomb-stones—but for the beauty which grows under one's eyes, that one makes for one's self as one goes. But 'Le vague désir de la beauté nous tue' he wrote in *Le Grand Ecart*, and the wistfulness which gives him delicacy has always driven him to the precise, to the well-defined, away from the *flo*u or the grandiose; has made him dread all pomposity and big drums—except the big drum of the jazz-band. 'Un œuvre sérieux ne peut avoir l'air sérieux' ('We hate poetry that has a palpable design on us,' Keats remarked), even when it is not merely a kind of shame which forces us to cover our deeper experiences with a mask, as was the case in *Le Potomak*. Thus 'literature', with all that it implies, is impossible. At all risks one must save one's self from *a* style: style one must have, but this consists in clear thinking (this is the gospel according to Boileau), but *a* style becomes a mannerism, a tic. Therefore, the clear line, the elastic material, and always and everywhere the real—'car seule la réalité, même bien recouverte, possède la vertu d'émouvoir.'

La réalité, however, is no simple matter, and for M. Cocteau the actual world is a succession of miracles. Given the tight-rope, to dance on it is an art one can hardly arrive at by one's self: nor can any help be obtained from human agency. Luckily there are some angels in the world, Picasso, Strawinsky, Satie, and there were Verlaine and Radiguet. 'L'ange se place juste entre l'humain et l'inhumain. C'est un jeune animal éclatant, charmant, vigoureux, qui passe du visible à l'invisible avec les puissants raccourcis d'un plongeur, le tonnerre d'ailes de mille pigeons sauvages.' Moreover, 'Nous abritons un ange que nous choquons sans cesse. Nous devons être gardiens de cet ange': or else, and this seems to be the meaning of his latest poems, we must surrender to him, and even ask to be shocked by him. This angel has always existed for M. Cocteau. He is in *Plain-Chant*, in *Le Coq et l'Arlequin*: he appears in *D'Un*

*Ordre Considéré comme une Anarchie*: the last poems are all addressed to him: he is an essential part of *Orphée*. *Thomas l'Imposteur* one may suspect to be about one, and Jacques of *Le Grand Écart* is the Heurtebise of *Orphée*. '——Drôle de Pays, murmura Jacques. C'étaient les propre termes d'un ange qui visite le monde et dissimule ses ailes sous une housse de vitrier.' Harlequin needs this invisible prop to sustain him as he dances upon the tight-rope. To know this is not to suspect him of cheating; on the contrary, it gives us confidence in him: it assures us of his sincerity.

The proper place for Harlequin is the theatre, and M. Cocteau recognises it as his natural home. *Le Bœuf sur le Toit*, his share in the Russian Ballet, *Les Mariés de la Tour Eiffel*, his versions of *Antigone* and *Romeo and Juliet*, were but a long preparation for his *Orphée*, the legend of Orpheus and Eurydice treated, as a *moralité légendaire* for the stage. M. Cocteau has also made it his business to frequent rehearsals, to discover the secrets of the Fratellini, and settle in his own mind the part played by setting and music. As a result he has become so much a master of stage tricks that one never notices he is using them. He has perfected a theatrical talent so that he knows just how much speech his action will stand, and how long any particular phase can be continued. If his literary cards are sometimes too obviously displayed, his theatrical ones remain hidden. Thus *Orphée*, as set by so sensitive and inventive a decorator as M. Jean Hugo, and acted by such rare artists as M. and Mme. Pitoëff is, whatever more it may be, a delicious toy, an exquisite trifle, which has hardly anything in it to spoil a fugitive enjoyment. So long as one does not stop to consider. For if we apply to it the test M. Ramon Fernandez suggests for the philosophical critic, M. Cocteau's play does not quite satisfy it. The test is this: 'il doit nous inspirer confiance en deux sortes d'affirmations différentes quoique conjuguées, car il doit-nous convaincre, d'un même acte mental, de la réalité de ses rapports avec les choses, et de la vérité des interprétations qu'il nous en propose.'

M. Cocteau is at least certain that not strangeness in the material, but strangeness in the proportion, is the artist's quest: 'Mettez un lieu commun en place, nettoyez-le, frottez-le, éclairez-le de telle sorte qu'il frappe avec sa jeunesse et avec la même fraîcheur, le même jet qu'il avait à sa source, vous ferez œuvre de poète.' Yet at the same time he is aware that not everyday life, but the intuitions

arising out of its contacts, give him the material he must arrange. Thus far he is an artist *sans reproche*, as he is notoriously *sans peur*. But it is when we come to the vehicle which he chooses to convey his intuitions that our faith begins to falter, and we even ask ourselves if he has succeeded in conveying them. For it is very difficult to harden the dream-quality he is seeking to use to an artistic end, and 'un rêveur est toujours mauvais poète'. Thus we find that as often as not we have to work from the symbol to life, instead of working from life intuitively apprehended to the symbol. This is less noticeable in his other work than in *Orphée*; for as far as goes the handling with which we are here concerned, no form is so unpromising as the drama, where the bricks and mortar of the structure are human beings, breathing, moving, speaking. There is no selection possible, no forgetfulness venial, here. You cannot, as you can in a painting, a poem, or even a novel, ignore the totality and yet produce a work coherent and consistent within its own limits. Assuming that all art is symbol, you cannot on the stage present the symbol, and leave aside the stuff of which it is made. Yet this is precisely what M. Cocteau seems to be trying to do. Thus his Orpheus and Eurydice remain symbols. In the presence of the talking horse, representing the false muse, or false guardian angel of Orpheus, they do not become human beings for long at a stretch, and thus never attain the proportions of symbols which we, and not the author, have made. There is no distinction between them, and Death and her assistants; the planes intermingle without ever becoming unified. Thus in spite of its great charm, its high degree of theatrical skill, we have to apply our intellects to apprehend the intuition, instead of ourselves apprehending intuitively through the æsthetic medium. We are left with no final attitude, though we are made very alert. Perhaps it was the realisation of this which led M. Cocteau into his greatest dramatic mistake, the direct statement; for on the stage, the meaning or the emotion should be implied. For Heurtebise the glazier to say that he was a guardian angel, for Eurydice to sum up by saying that it was ridiculous not to realise that our happiness lies in the everyday now, was wrong. We should be forced to guess these things: to have them told us destroys the validity of the symbol. Iago must not tell us he is the quintessence of evil; Tartuffe may not declare he is the incarnation of hypocrisy: then they would merely be statements of what their creators intended them to be.

In his poems or his books M. Cocteau may quite legitimately label his guardian angel, for certain kinds of poem can sustain more direct statement than a play. Here it is as though he were trying to make poetry do his dramatic work for him. In this he is not quite so good as his criticism; there is 'une poésie de théâtre; car la poésie au théâtre est une faute'. Still, it is hard for man to counter-mine with art, and one cannot but applaud the delicacy and grace of his piece, its beautiful phrasing. Indeed M. Cocteau is full of apparent contradictions. A man who says 'Je déteste les traits d'esprit' has no business to say anything so delightfully witty as 'ce vaudeville biologique qu'on appelle progrès'. But these considerations must not prejudice anything one may find in him towards a new apprehension of life, a development of sensibility, which would seem to be in the direction of relating the sense of miracle to normal actuality, all pervaded by a Laforguian wistfulness which is apt to become a naïf sentimentality, an abandonment to unregulated emotion for his ideal figure, his guardian angel, his Heurtebise. To the English mind his very gaiety, his lightness of touch, themselves indicative of his mastery, may suggest shallowness: but his light-heartedness is that of seriousness, a seriousness which because it cannot find a satisfaction for its intuitions in intellectual objectivity, has sought it in the Church. How far this may be an adequate solution for M. Cocteau's ferment remains to be seen.

BONAMY DOBRÉE

*New Verse.* By Robert Bridges. (Oxford Clarendon Press.)  
6s. net.

Dr. Robert Bridges has the reputation of being, and he probably is, the most learned of living English experimentalists in verse. To him, poetry is at least an art with a technique. He would not, as Rupert Brooke once did to me, when I asked him a question about the technique of verse, roll his eyes up to the ceiling, and say, in a semi-ecstatic voice, 'When I think about my love . . .' Dr. Bridges might rear and snort and champ; he might annihilate me fiercely for shallowness and sciolism; but he would recognise that my question had reference, not to what a man's feelings about the woman he loved were, but to methods of controlling and ordering the expression of those feelings. In fact, it might be said that, in

this matter, Dr. Bridges is too learned, and that the native heat of his poetry is too often lost, or chilled, in the pursuit of method. There are four different methods in this book alone; of its eighty-eight pages, forty-one are 'in the writer's latest manner and still peculiar to himself: it may be styled Neo-Miltonic Syllabics'; three 'are in Accentual measures: the reproaches against this manner having been launched fifty years ago may be considered obsolete'; thirty-two are 'all in recognisable old styles'; four 'are of the most ancient facture, in William Stone's (somewhat amended) quantitative prosody: this is still in full taboo, but the hitherto unpublished specimens here included are of the date of the writer's earlier delinquencies'; and eight pages are blank or nearly so.

Here is matter for meditation: accentual measures that have had reproaches launched against them; quantitative prosody that is still in full taboo; Neo-Miltonic Syllabics that are the writer's latest manner, still peculiar to himself, and that—I now complete the quotation—'pretend to offer their true desideratum to the advocates of Free Verse'; and I pause on this, for I remember that Dr. Bridges read a 'paper on Free Verse' before the literary society of his old college in Oxford, and published it later (November, 1922) in *The London Mercury*—under the title of 'Humdrum and Harum-Scarum', and in this paper he took me to task, and, to be blunt, walloped me. At least, I felt that some sort of castigation was intended; but I am not exactly sure what Dr. Bridges was driving at. He seemed to agree that at the basis of all poetry there was rhythm; and that poetry could be in the form of 'free verse'; but he also appeared to claim some mystical quality, not only for poetry in regular metre, but also for the actual typographical arrangement of the syllables. He set out six well-known lines of Milton (*Paradise Lost*, III, 37 *seq.*) as follows:

Then feed on Thoughts,  
That voluntary move harmonious numbers;  
As the wakeful Bird sings darkling,  
And in shadiest Covert hid  
                                tunes her nocturnal note.  
Thus with the Year seasons return,  
But not to me returns Day,  
Or the sweet approach of Ev'n or Morn.

'The very diction of the verses has suffered terribly,' is Dr. Bridges' comment: 'I doubt if I should have seen any merit in them had I read them thus in the free verse of a contemporary poet.' But the diction of the verses has suffered terribly only at the hands of Dr. Bridges. In the first place, it is no argument either for or against free verse to rearrange Milton's decasyllables. Presumably, Milton knew what he was about when he wrote them, and, if he put them in that form, he felt them in that form; and it is an impertinence to set them out otherwise. Now, let me commit the same impertinence in my own fashion, which is not quite so ingenuous as Dr. Bridges'. Thus:

Then feed on Thoughts,  
That voluntary move  
Harmonious numbers;  
As the wakeful Bird  
Sings darkling,  
And in shadiest covert hid  
Tunes her nocturnal note  
Thus with the year  
Seasons return,  
But not to me returns  
Day or the sweet approach  
Of Ev'n or Morn.

Dr. Bridges should play fair. He recognises 'that diction in free verse will needs be far more exacting than the diction of metrical verse. It must be more beautiful in itself because it has relinquished the technique of one of the main sources of its beauty.' I am not sure what Dr. Bridges means by 'diction' here; but I agree with him in the sense that free verse, if it is not poetry, is next to nothing at all, where the quality of regular verse would be camouflaged behind the metre. The second part of his proposition should read, I suppose, 'because free verse has relinquished one of the main sources of the beauty of metrical verse, its technique.' But has it? And when did a technique become a source of beauty? I turn to Dr. Bridges' Neo-Miltonic Syllabics, which, I imagine, have a technique, and, therefore, a main source of beauty; and take:

'But as a man, owning a fine cloth of Arras,  
in reverence for his heirloom will examine it all

inside and out, and learn whether of white wool or silk  
 the high-warp, what of silver and gold, how fine the thread,  
 what number of graded tints in hatching of the woof;  
 so we study Nature, wrong side as well as right  
 and in the eternal mystery of God's working find  
 full many unsightly a token of beauty's trouble;  
 and gain knowledge of Nature and much wisdom thereby:  
 but these making no part of beauty's welcome face,  
 these we turn to the wall, hiding away the mean  
 ugly brutish obscene clumsy irrelevances  
 which Honesty will own to with baffling humour  
 and in heightening the paradox can find pleasure;  
 since without such full knowledge can no man have faith  
 nor will his thought or picture of life be worth a bean.'

This is a fair, indeed, a good, example of the movement of the Neo-Miltonic Syllabics. The lines run to eleven, twelve, thirteen or fourteen syllables; if you allow for elisions, some of them harsh, and count a feminine ending as a syllable, the basis is twelve. I cannot discover, by inspection or ear—and the advocates of regular verse make much of this—any other technique to these 'verses', and, in fact, they fall on my ear as a rather nice piece of somewhat archaic prose. So, to turn the tables on Dr. Bridges, let us set them out as prose:

'But as a man, owning a fine cloth of Arras, in reverence for his heirloom will examine it all inside and out, and learn whether of white wool or silk the high-warp, what of silver and gold, how fine the thread, what number of graded tints in hatching of the woof; so we study Nature, wrong side as well as right, and in the eternal mystery of God's working find full many unsightly a token of beauty's trouble; and gain knowledge of Nature and much wisdom thereby: but these making no part of beauty's welcome face, these we turn to the wall, hiding away the mean ugly brutish obscene clumsy irrelevances which Honesty will own to with baffling humour and in heightening the paradox can find pleasure; since without such full knowledge can no man have faith nor will his thought or picture of life be worth a bean.'

I cannot accept this as *my* true desideratum for free verse, or cadence, as I call it, which is free only of regular metre, not of

poetic rhythm; and poetic rhythm calls for a perceptible balance of accents and quantities. Free verse may and even should be composed by ear; but it will be satisfying only if the balance is there; and in the distribution of its balances of accent and quantity it provides infinitely greater possibilities of poetic rhythm than any regular metre can offer. If I may quote, with their scansion, some lines of my own, it may show that free verse is not so 'free' as it looks:

Here the wind	— u —
Winnows the sand	— u u —
As it sifts	u u —
Through the grass-wrack,	— u — —
And the grains beat	u u — —
Needle-points	— u —
Against the skin.	u — u —
Here the sea	— u —
Gnaws the long coast,	— u — —
Churning the shingle	— u u — u
Over the beach,	— u u —
And the waves	u u —
Wind-driven	— — u
Whiten and topple	— u u — u
Over our bodies.	— u u — u
Wind and sea	— u —
And the print	u u —
Of naked feet.	u — u —

It is rhythm that is, not the main source of the beauty of poetry, for that is in the poet's mind, or soul, if you like, but the physical exterior of poetry, just as the form of a rose is the physical exterior of its loveliness; and to hobble a poet's sense of rhythm to a regular metre, on the plea that he will, if a true poet, create accidental beauties in the struggle with its difficulties and its clash with his sense of rhythm, is absurd. Nevertheless, any poetic rhythm is better in what is offered as a poetic composition than no poetic rhythm; and that is why the most satisfying part of Dr. Bridges' *New Verse* is that which is written in 'recognisable old styles', or regular metre.

F. S. FLINT



*The Great Gatsby.* F. Scott Fitzgerald. (Chatto and Windus.)  
7s. net.

*All The Sad Young Men.* F. Scott Fitzgerald. (Scribners.) \$2.00.

*Gullible's Travels.* Ring W. Lardner. (Chatto and Windus.)  
7s. 6d. net.

*How to Write Short Stories.* Ring W. Lardner. (Chatto and  
Windus.) 7s. 6d. net.

*Gentlemen Prefer Blondes.* Anita Loos. (Brentano.)

American criticism is seldom responsibly aware of contemporary figures, and for that reason one can say that the deaths of Melville, Crane, and James, in successive decades, aroused in the American consciousness little sense of loss. They were gone, it is true: but as their presence had been little felt, and their influence had been practically negligible, their departure left little awareness, as it should have done, that there were no writers of fiction to take their places. As a matter of fact, American criticism was all too cheerfully convinced that in the diagnostic inventions of Frank Norris and Mr. Upton Sinclair, in the short stories of O. Henry, and above all in the cumbersome journalistic epics of Mr. Dreiser, it possessed a quite sufficient guarantee of excellence. No criticism is so fascinated by the ephemeral as American criticism, or so careless of the past in its appraisal of the present. It is joyfully headlong in its passionate pursuit of the autochthonous, it delights to find queer geniuses in queer corners (it finds them every day), and if they aren't *too* queer, *too* complicated, it treats them all alike: with magnificent generosity. It is sufficient comment on the results of this tendency to note that in the recent abridged *Cambridge History of American Literature*—A Short History of American Literature—which purported to be an authoritative and complete survey by American critics of good standing, Melville was dismissed in four scant pages as a sea-romancer ruined by metaphysics, while Crane and Emily Dickinson were not even mentioned.

But what does it matter? This shortness of memory, and this indiscriminateness of taste, combine to produce for American critics an illusion of perpetual novelty and inexhaustible plenty. The great realistic novelist, who reappears every ten years as a Norris, a Sinclair, a Dreiser, or a Lewis, is always perfectly and surprisingly new. Great new poets emerge, have a moment's unprecedented

glory, and are swallowed up in oblivion. The American language is periodically rediscovered and employed—always, of course, for the first time. Here, for example, is its latest practitioner, Mr. Lardner, an admirable journalistic humourist, whose sketch of baseball characters have been delighting American newspaper readers for several years. Mr. Lardner writes in an amusing vernacular, and he has a satiric vein which is just good enough (if coarse, and not infrequently cheap) to carry one safely through a first reading. Further than that, one cannot go: it is impossible to agree with those critics who, perhaps a little thrilled at having discovered Mr. Lardner's striking talent on the sports page of a newspaper, suggest that he is another Mark Twain, and that his short stories 'are the best ever written by an American'. Mr. Lardner's gift is a small one. He has an alert understanding of one type of American—the genial, gum-chewing 'roughneck': shrewd, humorous, immature, self-deceiving, pathetically gregarious and romantic: and this type he uses again and again, male or female, old or young, always with the same vernacular. The vernacular is skilfully caught, the orthography is entertaining, but Mr. Lardner relies too much upon it, and it becomes tiresome. As for the story, the plot, the psychology, the art—one has only to put the best of Mr. Lardner (*The Champion*, in *How To Write Short Stories*) beside Stephen Crane's *Maggie*. In *Maggie*, one sees the same sort of material, American language and all, used by a poet for the making of a genuine and moving piece of literature. Nowhere, in Mr. Lardner's two books, is there any slightest attempt to achieve that sort of alchemy. Mr. Lardner seeks, like Mr. Will Rogers, to entertain; and in that he often delightfully succeeds.

And so does Miss Loos, whose *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* has already become a byword. Miss Loos has one great advantage over Mr. Lardner—she has published only one book, and in this she has not attempted, with any elaborateness, to create more than one character. This character (caricature) is exactly the sort that Mr. Lardner might have conceived—the vernacular is remarkably like (so much so that one could transpose passages from *Gullible's Travels* to *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*, and *vice versa*, without the slightest jar to contexts) and the wit moves in the same manner, a manner familiar to anyone who knows the American vaudeville stage: laconically eccentric, laconically exaggerative, laconically deprecia-

tive, laconically shocking. Miss Loos uses this manner more sharply than Mr. Lardner, and manages to say, in the course of her book, a greater number of memorably absurd things; and the European tour of her beautiful baleful blonde affords a more various scene for satire than Mr. Lardner has been able to find on the baseball diamond or at Palm Beach. Of her cynicism, all one can say is that it is an abyss. And surely there was never before, in a tale so reckless of conventional morals, a discretion so miraculous. Miss Loos's terrifying blonde, so infinitely more deadly than any of the males she encounters, employs in this regard a perfection of technique which is really beautiful in one so young and (apparently) so ingenuous. It reminds one, however, that the profession is among the most honourable and ancient.

Nevertheless, *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*, like Mr. Lardner's *Gullible's Travels*, is an ephemerid. Is it likely that Miss Loos will do anything better, or will even experience a desire to do so? Her limitations are those of Mr. Lardner—one guesses that her vein is small, that she has no great resources (save as an entertainer) and that she would probably be a little surprised if one urged her to move up from the class of *The Young Visitors* to something better. . . . And it is because he does, in this sense, try to move up, that Mr. Scott Fitzgerald deserves to be reviewed in better company than Miss Loos or Mr. Lardner afford him. Mr. Fitzgerald has enjoyed a spectacular career as a writer of short stories for American magazines; and in these, as well as in *This Side of Paradise*, his first novel, he showed (mixed with much magazine shoddy) enough ability to make one fearful lest he should allow himself to be manipulated, by his audience and by his success, as O. Henry was manipulated. In his latest collection of stories, *All The Sad Young Men*, he appears still all too manipulable; though in one or two of the stories he also makes it evident that his conscience is not yet wholly dead. *Absolution* is an attempt at a close psychological study of hysteria which has good things in it but as a whole is somewhat forced: one feels that Mr. Fitzgerald is not speaking his own language. In this, and in *The Rich Boy*, he fails to detach, and to make clear, his effect—so much so that one suspects him of not seeing it too clearly himself.

In *The Great Gatsby*, however, Mr. Fitzgerald has written a highly coloured and brilliant little novel which, by grace of one cardinal virtue, quite escapes the company of most contemporary

American fiction—it has excellence of form. It is not great, it is not large, it is not strikingly subtle; but it is well imagined and shaped, it moves swiftly and neatly, its scene is admirably seized and admirably matched with the theme, and its hard bright tone is entirely original. Technically, it appears to owe much to the influence of the cinema; and perhaps also something to Henry James—a peculiar conjunction, but not so peculiar if one reflects on the flash-backs and close-ups and paralleled themes of that ‘little experiment in the style of Gyp’, *The Awkward Age*. Mr. Fitzgerald’s publishers call *The Great Gatsby* a satire. This is deceptive. It is only incidentally a satire, it is only in the *setting* that it is satirical, and in the tone provided by the minor characters. The story itself, and the main figure, are tragic, and it is precisely the fantastic vulgarity of the scene which gives to the excellence of Gatsby’s soul its finest bouquet, and to his tragic fate its sharpest edge. All of Mr. Fitzgerald’s people are real—but Gatsby comes close to being superb. He is betrayed to us slowly and skilfully, and with a keen tenderness which in the end makes his tragedy a deeply moving one. By so much, therefore, *The Great Gatsby* is better than a mere satire of manners, and better than Mr. Fitzgerald’s usual sort of superficial cleverness. If only he can refrain altogether in future from the sham romanticism and sham sophistication which the magazines demand of him, and give another turn of the screw to the care with which he writes, he may well become a first-rate novelist. How deeply does he feel? That is the question, a question we do not ask of Miss Loos or Mr. Lardner.

CONRAD AIKEN

*Johannes Scotus Erigena.* A study in mediæval philosophy by Henry Bett. (Cambridge University Press.) 10s.

Mr. Bett’s book is very opportune. As a summary of Erigena’s philosophy it seems completely adequate, and it is certainly logically satisfying. None but the specialist will be able or will desire to master the original sources of that philosophy to the extent implied in this study, and this is said with a sense of relief not in any way related to mental sloth. Mr. Bett inspires confidence by his ability to write good prose and by his perfect ordering of the material in hand; and we may therefore conclude that he has fulfilled the true function

of scholarship, which is to act as intermediary between the discrete facts (whether in time or place, whether history or science), and that forum of general ideas which at its lowest is 'the reading public' and at its highest the mind of the poet. And in this particular instance the object of the scholar's research is of some immediate importance. Nothing is of more moment than that state of mind which has various manifestations in current literature and philosophy, but which is perhaps best described as a revival of metaphysics. It issues out of the general break-up of a materialistic civilisation, as well as out of the positive achievements of science. It has aspects of doubtful import, such as a frequent emotional surrender to spiritual nostrums of every kind, both ancient and modern. But in its intellectual aspects it is marked by a desire to return to a point in the history of thought at which the evil principle had not yet begun its work. That principle is freely recognised as dualism—as the separation of mind and matter into distinct modes of being—and its origin is traced, conveniently at any rate, to Descartes. That it was not entirely original in Descartes is evident enough from a study of the sources of Descartes' ideas,<sup>1</sup> and some of the fundamental assumptions which made dualism possible are to be traced through St. Augustine and the Neoplatonists back to Plato himself.

It might be assumed that the only necessary step for modern philosophy to take was to return to the earliest intellectual system which in any adequate manner treated the universe as a unity, and to accommodate our present sense and sensibility to its formal methods, extending and developing these as required. Perhaps no great harm would be done by a synthesis of modern thought and the philosophy of Aristotle—if anything so deliberate can be imagined. But a consideration which cannot be neglected is that a synthesis which includes many aspects of the modern position has already been made by mediæval philosophy, particularly as formulated in its completeness by St. Thomas. It is conceivable that we might find the mentality of St. Thomas much more familiar to us than the mentality of Aristotle—familiar in the sense of intimacy and sympathy. It does at any rate embody more than 1500 years of our common historical experience, and to that extent seems more tangible.

If we are to return to scholasticism, there is something to be

<sup>1</sup> Such as was recently undertaken by M. Alfred Espinas, in *Descartes et la Morale* (Paris: Editions Bossard).

said for beginning with Erigena. He is well within the Augustinian tradition, which is the Platonic, and scholasticism does not properly begin until the influence of Aristotle becomes dominant. But Erigena introduced a quasi-æsthetic sense of systematisation into Christian philosophy, and his great work, *De divisione naturæ*, though condemned by the Church, formed the model of all subsequent systems. 'No philosopher (writes Mr. Bett) was ever less original, in the narrower sense, than Erigena. It would be easy to find in the pseudo-Dionysius, Maximus, Origen, Gregory of Nyssa, and Augustine, a source for almost every single thought in the Scot's system. Yet, on the other hand, he is by no means a mere compiler, for he has wrought all these thoughts into an impressive scheme, and he has done it with remarkable skill and subtlety. The form and the system are his, and that is no small praise. It was only a metaphysician of great insight who could have found all that he needed in the incomplete and disorderly literature to which he had access, and it was only a philosopher of great speculative power who could have wrought it all into so massive a system.'

Erigena begins, like all adequate philosophers, with the postulate of unity. Unity, indeed, is with him an animating passion, and the charge of pantheism, which was largely responsible for his condemnation, arises from the dominance of this idea in his philosophy. But the accusation, as Mr. Bett shows, is really an abuse of language. 'If by pantheism we mean (as we ought to do) that the actuality of the universe is taken as one and all, and identified with the Absolute—that the totality of things is taken for God—then Erigena is emphatically not a pantheist. If, on the other hand, any doctrine which holds the essential unity of the Creator and the creation is identified with pantheism, then indeed Erigena is a pantheist, for his doctrine is absolute monism.' To enter into the details of Erigena's monistic system would be to repeat Mr. Bett's exact summary; I will only indicate here a few stages of the exposition which make evident the relevance and interest of Erigena's philosophy. There is, in the first place, the cardinal difficulty of this as of any monistic system—the passage from the One to the Many, from the abstract unity of the world-principle in the Logos to the manifoldness of actual existence.' Erigena's system postulated degrees of reality and was to that extent Platonic. 'There is the Divine Nature, one, eternal, immutable, and utterly beyond speech or

thought. Then there is the Logos, one with God, and yet the unity and the aggregate of the primordial causes. Then there are these causes, as separately conceived. Then there are the substances, which are not very adequately defined. Then, from the blending of these with quantity and quality and so forth, there arise the general elements of the world (which are still immaterial). Then from the interaction of the qualities of these there come the real elements which again blend into the existing world.' Mr. Bett quotes an eminent historian of philosophy (Ueberweg) as saying in this connection that 'the fundamental idea, and at the same time the fundamental error, in Erigena's doctrine is the idea that the degrees of abstraction correspond with the degrees of real existence. He hypostates the *Tabula Logica*.' To which Mr. Bett replies: 'But a phrase like this hardly disposes of the matter. Where do we get our logical abstractions? They are abstracted from actual existence, and not only so, but they are abstracted precisely because they seem to be the most general and the most essential characteristics of actual existence. The actuality of the universe does, as a matter of fact, embody these attributes. The degrees of abstraction do correspond, in some sense, with the degrees of real existence. They are already somehow hypostatized in the world—unless we are prepared to accept the standpoint of an extreme nominalism (and ultimately of an absolute scepticism) and believe that they are a fiction of the human mind, without any relation to objective reality. But if we believe that we have got them out of actual existence, that obviously means that in some way they were already there. What does this mean, again, but that our logical abstractions (in so far as they are properly abstracted from real existence) are in some sense the immaterial scaffolding of the universe, and that things do materialise around this intelligible framework? So Erigena thought, and there are recent discoveries and speculations that might be held to point in this direction.'

The nature of Erigena's monism is further elucidated in a useful comparison which Mr. Bett draws between Spinoza and Erigena. 'They both solve the crucial problem of their respective philosophies by a dogmatic assumption. For Spinoza the problem was the opposition of mind and matter, and he reconciled that opposition by his doctrine that thought and extension are not separate things, but different aspects of the same thing, different attributes of one

substance. For Erigena essentially the same problem existed, and he envisaged it as the opposition between God and the world. There is the one, ineffable, immutable superexistence of God, and the manifold and changeable and finite existence of the world as we know it. Erigena resolved this much as Spinoza did his problem by assuming that the opposition is only apparent, and due to the finitude of our minds. For God is the one and only essence of all that is, but he is manifested in all the manifoldness of creation, while remaining immutable in Himself. So the primal causes are one and indivisible in the Logos, but they are separated as we think of them in our minds and in the world, though still one, and still unchanged in the Logos. So, too, the substances exist undivided in the primal causes, but they proceed into the diverse actuality of the world, while still remaining in themselves. All the duality and diversity of the world are on the lower side, on the side of material existence and human knowledge. On the higher side, on the side of the eternal and the real, there is absolute unity. In other words, both Erigena and Spinoza attain a monistic doctrine by the assumption that the dualism of the universe is not the real opposition of equally real principles, but the apparent duality of one principle, as seen from above and from below, so to speak, *in aeternitate Dei*, and *in temporalitate mundi*.'

It will be obvious that such an intellectual interpretation of the universe bears a very sympathetic relation to such philosophy as has been elaborated by modern science—above all to the philosophy of Professor Whitehead, which we dealt with in the last number of *The New Criterion*. The counters of expression are infinitely different, but the attitude of mind is the same. Both systems rest on the assumption, which we might fairly call Aristotelian, of an organic unity in the physical world, which is, in itself, the expression of an absolute order of reality. The difficulty, both then and now, is to reconcile this ordered system with the sense of the moral disunity of the world. What place, in such an order, is there for Evil? It is a difficult question for the monist, and the only way to avoid it is the way of Erigena, which is also the way of St. Augustine and St. Thomas, and that is to deny the reality of evil. This is not so paradoxical as would seem. 'It does not mean that evil simply does not exist. No sane man has ever denied the actual existence of evil in the world. Evil, as a phenomenon, is as real as anything



else in the world of phenomena. Hence any scheme of thought, such as materialism or positivism, which accepts no reality beyond the phenomenal, could not possibly tolerate or even understand any doctrine of the non-reality of evil. But theism, or indeed idealism of any kind, *must* hold evil to be unreal, in some sense. For the fundamental postulate of any theistic or idealistic doctrine is a reality beyond the world of phenomena, a reality which (because it is a primary and an ultimate reality) is more real than the phenomenal reality; an *omnitudo realitatis*, an absolute reality, in comparison with which phenomenal reality is relatively unreal. . . . Erigena teaches that evil, as negative, is causeless. It is useless to seek for a cause of evil, for what is mere absence of good, mere privation of existence, cannot have a cause. It arises from the irrational motion of the will, and so the will is, in a sense, the source of it, as the sphere in which it arises, but it is strictly uncaused. . . . All evil therefore, whether in angels or in man, all sin, whether original or actual, is rooted not in the essential nature, but in a perverse motion of the free will.' These quotations from Mr. Bett's exposition need no comment; they pose the problem in all its actuality. But it is possible to suggest that the doctrine of free-will, which has so agitated the history of philosophy and religion, is not in itself a genuine doctrine, but merely a screen for this more fundamental problem of the nature of evil. But for the existence of evil it would not have been necessary to posit the existence of a free will. And if Erigena had found some solution of the problem other than a resort to a free will, his system would have gained in that logicity which already characterised it in other directions—particularly in his conception of a creative godhead. In this matter his system shows some advantages over the more perfect system of Aquinas. Erigena regarded the act, or rather the process, of creation as necessary; 'it is grounded in the essence of God, for goodness is creative in its very nature. . . . But in Aquinas it is quite definitely taught that there is no such necessity. The creation is the result of an act of the will of God, and (though His will is identified with His essence) that act of will might not have taken place. Now it is obvious that this, again, makes the link between God and the world less organic, and emphasises the separation, where Erigena rather emphasises the connexion, between the Creator and the creation.' In this matter our sympathy should go out to Erigena rather than

to Aquinas, for the result of modern science has been to make an organic conception of the universe absolutely essential, a conception in which there is perhaps room for certain destructive aspects of change (metabolism), but in which the fundamental energy is creative. Perhaps a modern doctrine could identify evil with destructive metabolism.

Two amazing paradoxes concerning Erigena may be given as tit-bits to conclude with. One relates to his thought: his doctrine of the superexistence of God leads to the conclusion that God may be said to be nothing. The terms *Deus* and *nihil* are logically equal: 'both express something beyond the pale of existence *as we know it* in the universe.' The other paradox relates to his life, and is the strange legend of his loss of it. Sometime shortly after the battle of Ethandun, when the Danes were finally defeated, Alfred the Great is said to have invited Erigena to England, to teach at the Abbey of Malmesbury. Here the Scot spent some years in retirement, but in the end his scholars stabbed him to death with their pens: *a pueris quos docebat, graphiis perfossus*.

HERBERT READ

*Last Essays.* By Joseph Conrad. (J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd.)  
7s. 6d.

Joseph Conrad is not at his best in an essay. To read his essays is to find an interesting, but not a great writer. He is not a Hazlitt, or a Lamb, but then, we cannot expect him so to be. The essay was too small for him, as it was just big enough for them. Like a large ship in a small dock, Conrad floats uneasily in the essay; and, to carry the image a little further, where in the great sea-spaces of the novel he sails with ease, freely turning as he wills his course in vast and sweeping convolutions, in the shipyard-confines of the essay he rides chafing at anchorage, somewhat ponderously keeping to the point, looking leashed, and rather tame. If this seems too fanciful, yet it conveys the impression I received on reading this volume of *Last Essays*, which was published this year.

In these essays and articles, it seems to me, his style has lost its individual quality. In place of the personal flavour, which Conrad's prose undoubtedly possesses, and which is recognised as the chief virtue in an essayist, there is substituted the impersonal style of the anonymous reviewer. This is not quite true, of course. The real

Conrad has not disappeared so completely beneath the essay as I seem to imply. But it gives approximately the effect on me of the change-over from the prose of the best of his novels, so heavily perfumed with his personality, to the prose of these essays, and miscellaneous writings. On reading *Last Essays* the impression is that of a careful straining for the next thought, for the next line, even for the next word. Every word and every thought fall into their proper place, but they do not seem to do so by chance as, of course, in the best writing, they always do. As Conrad himself would be the first to acknowledge, literature is not just a matter of meaning what you say. You must also say what you mean, and say it perfectly. It is necessary to please as well as to enlighten the mind, for truth is not merely a matter of the intellect. And to please, in writing, as in other work, the worker himself must take a delight in what he does. But in these essays, Conrad seems to be writing as a matter of duty. That is to say, he was writing against the grain, a thing fatal to the appearance of easy, joyful prose.

There is a reason for this, and it lies, I suggest, in the fact that the critic and the artist are not to be found in one person. 'Male and female created He them', ever afterwards to be divided and complementary. The difference between the great artist and the great critic largely consists in a difference in them of the proportion between two main qualities: emotion and intellect. In the artist, emotion preponderates; in the critic, intellect. Neither, of course, can be great without a certain amount of both qualities, neither is completely fulfilled except in each other. Only the great critic fully appreciates the great artist, only the great artist calls forth the best in a great critic. By the bye, looking at this matter of the artist and the critic in such a way, the stock gibe of the artist, that the critic is a sterile creature, an artist who has failed in creation and taken to carping, is shown up as the silly remark one has always felt it to be. It is almost like denouncing a man for being unable to bear children.

To return to *The Last Essays*. I think most will agree that Conrad is primarily a teller of tales. That is the essential secret of his success as a writer. Those people, and they are many, who never rise in their reading above the level of magazine stories; those people who, in Wilde's phrase, make journalism unreadable and leave literature unread, can enjoy quite a number of Conrad's stories

Even so, Shakespeare won the general ear, that ear which is usually deaf to all but the clamorous calling of the daily round. Tell a good tale, and all will listen to you. Conrad generally does tell a good tale, and it was the tale itself which inspired his best work. His finest descriptive passages are so good because they are filled with the emotion of the story. Half their beauty has been created by the impetus of some resigned victim in the tale, some hero or heroine who is walking without haste to an appointed end.

Take, for example, this passage from *Victory*, and see how the vision of a background, seen through the grave, meditative eyes of the hero, is given an added shimmer of beauty:

‘Like most dreamers to whom it is sometimes given to hear the music of the spheres, Heyst, the wanderer of the Archipelago, had a taste for silence which he had been able to gratify for years. The islands are very quiet. One sees them lying about, clothed in their dark garments of leaves, in a great hush of silver and azure, where the sea without murmur meets the sky in a ring of magic stillness. A sort of smiling somnolence broods over them; the very voices of the people are soft and subdued, as if afraid to break some protective spell.’

Or take this, from one of the short stories:

‘The evening closed upon me. The shadows lengthened, deepened, mingled together into a pool of twilight in which the flower-beds glowed like coloured embers; whiffs of heavy scent came to me as if the dusk of this hemisphere were but the dimness of a temple, and the garden an enormous censor swinging before the altar of the stars.’

There is no such prose as this, or very little, in the essays. There is information, interest, amusement. There are examples of, to me, hitherto unseen but never surprising sides of Conrad's existence: a letter to *The Times*; an able and clearly written ‘Memorandum on the Scheme for Fitting Out a Sailing Ship’, which was done for the Holt Steamship Company; a review of a Galsworthy novel; a remembered conversation with Stephen Crane. In the first essay of the volume, on ‘Geography and Some Explorers’, we realise once again how very much Conrad loved the simple virtues of sea-life: courage, endurance, quiet devotion to duty, calmness in face of danger. His tributes to such explorers as Cook and Livingstone are those of a man who truly admires them, and who can

appreciate the toil they underwent in their disinterested desire to explore and to map out the unknown world. In such essays as 'A Christmas Day at Sea', or 'The Unlighted Coast', we get some little tale of hearsay or experience which brings us close to the real Conrad. The touch of his genius is here. The rest is only interesting. 'The Congo Diary', first published in this volume, is very interesting as a view of the Polish wanderer and future novelist learning his English A.B.C. But, like the rest of the book, it is irrelevant to his fame.

JOHN SHAND

- Henry Brocken.* By Walter de la Mare. (Collins.) 3s. 6d.  
*The Return.* By Walter de la Mare. (Collins.) 3s. 6d.  
*Memoirs of a Midget.* By Walter de la Mare. (Collins.) 3s. 6d.  
*The Connoisseur.* By Walter de la Mare. (Collins.) 10s. 6d.

The tradition lingers that it is the business of quarterlies to scrutinise the work of great men and declare 'This will never do'. Mr. de la Mare's new collection of stories and the reissue of three of his earlier books have been the occasion, not long since, of several of these rather supercilious examinations. Just and clever critics pooh-pooh him as Dr. Johnson pooh-poohed Collins, in almost the same words and for the same reason. They miss the poetry. Unfortunately to argue his merits with an opponent who starts with an unfavourable impression, who is deaf to the ditties of no tone, who finds Mr. de la Mare 'whimsical' or 'quaint' before marking the delicacy of his ear and eye, is profitless. Here is a poet of detail and small things, one who can number the streaks of the tulip, that rare gift vouchsafed in different degrees to Drayton and Shakespeare, Clare and Tennyson, but seldom before with such high seriousness.

Mr. de la Mare has a close affinity with Charles Lamb, Lamb 'the frolic and the gentle': the same freakishness, the same humour (a little Victorian now, it seems), the same intense, creative literary sense—I imagine Mr. de la Mare is one of the few readers since Lamb to appreciate the *Polyolbion*—the same pickled style. At his best he is more poetical, at his worst he is more frigid. In 1904 he tuned such sentences as these:

'We were alone with the fresh wind of morning and the clear pillars of the East.'

'... like a shadow upon wheat the furious companies melted away.'

But beside them we stumble upon

'Here my bright river disembogued in noise and foam.'

The word is in Webster and Massinger, but, even there, has a ludicrous accent. Bosola terms it 'rough-cast phrase', while the page who brandishes it in *The Emperor of the East* is a 'Hercules in *decimo sexto*'.

Mr. de la Mare's prose is full of echoes and reminiscences, woven of innumerable old threads. Even his characters are rooted deep in the soil of the past and draw their sap from the Elizabethans, and Wordsworth and the Brontës. His rambling houses with their old portraits and leather bindings and green glooms, his starlit skies and rain-washed twilights, his fields and forests and lichen-stones are his own. When he writes of them, he is a poet: but, alas, he writes of them no more.

*The Midget* is my dearly-loved companion, but, I confess, I find *The Connoisseur* unreadable. In an attempt to create a prose style Mr. de la Mare has squeezed away all the poetry of *Henry Brocken* and *The Midget* (in which, it is true, there is much metrical writing): what remains is self-conscious, pedantic, facetious even, with every other word apologising for its existence in inverted commas. The clear, bright stream has become a foiled circuitous wanderer. There is a certain character which has a curious fascination for Mr. de la Mare: he appears first as the doctor in *Macbeth* (*Henry Brocken*), then as Mr. Bethany in *The Return*, and afterwards in many disguises. But his speech betrays him: and to his garrulous tongue Mr. de la Mare's exceptional powers of description are sacrificed.

But no criticism can touch *The Memoirs of a Midget*. In this, Mr. de la Mare (who had followed up *Henry Brocken* with *The Return*, as different as *The Invisible Man* from *The Celestial Omnibus*) found himself. From the first chapter to the last we are wrapt. Not only do we view the earth and the heavens through Miss M's eyes as if for the first time, but we are present at unforgettable scenes, haunted by tragic passions. The dialogue is treated with more economy than in the other books. Powerful though the atmosphere

is in *The Return*, certain moments drag, and Sheila, the decorative and shallow wife, is a lay figure beside Fanny Bowater, the siren, clear, hard, cold as glass.

*The Connoisseur*, gnarled and thorny in style, yields at any rate one fine piece of descriptive writing, the hazardous cliff-path to Mr. Kempe's ruined, deserted retreat, a not unworthy child of the passage in *King Lear*.

Mr. de la Mare's stories, even if he is strangely mesmerised by the phrase 'not all there' (just as Wordsworth was by a name on a tombstone), cannot be lightly dismissed as 'queerish talk'. What else is *The Ancient Mariner*? A critic who does not find *Henry Brocken* and *The Memoirs of a Midget* instinct with poetry is fit for stratagems and spoils. He is in the camp of Dr. Johnson rather than in that of Lamb.

GEORGE RYLANDS

*Ewiger Vorrat Deutscher Poesie.* Besorgt von Rudolf Borchardt.  
Munich. (Verlag der Bremer Presse.)

A year or two ago the exquisite taste of Hugo von Hofmannsthal and the typographical dignity and skill of the Bremer Presse, combined to give us a 'Deutscher Lesebuch', or collection of German prose of permanent beauty and value between 1750 and 1850—a revelation of charm, graceful strength and perfection of form unsuspected by the average reader of German literature. The same printers have now undertaken to give a treasury of all that is permanently valuable in German poetry. It is a task never essayed before, at least not quite in the same way. Anthologies of German poetry we have had, of course, by the hundred, but they have been historical anthologies, repositories of poems favoured for their historical interest or association with particular epochs. The absolute, timeless values have been forgotten, and rigid selection by æsthetic standards has been sacrificed to completeness and comprehensiveness.

Herr Rudolf Borchardt is a poet of great sensibility, and in avowedly taking Palgrave's *Golden Treasury* as his model he has aimed at justifying the claim asserted in his title, at giving, in Palgrave's words, 'something neither modern nor ancient, but true and

speaking to the heart of man alike throughout all ages.' By this token most of the omissions which no ordinary anthologist would have had the heart to make are understandable and profoundly welcome. No 'Wacht am Rhein' or 'Deutschland, Deutschland über Alles', of course; none of Ernst Moritz Arndt's patriotic convivialities. Not that patriotism, if only transmuted into beauty, has been left out—Walther von der Vogelweide's *Preis Deutschlands* passes the test triumphantly, and is, incidentally, a reminder that Herr Borchardt has set his beginnings far earlier than Palgrave, making of his collection a German equivalent of *Golden Treasury* and Chamber's *Early English Lyrics* combined.

Another anthological convention against which Herr Borchardt has set his face is what we may call the musical prejudice in German poetry. Not a poem is admitted, we feel, purely because of its association as a song with beautiful music. Hence no Chamisso, nothing from *Frauenliebe und Leben*; no *Erl-könig*, no *Kennst du das Land*, or even *Über allen Gipfeln*. Only a heroic—and we cannot but feel—wilful and violent dissociation from Schubert's music can have prompted the last omission. And as for Heine—the rejections are startling, or at least challenging. Not only no *Du bist wie eine Blume* and half-a-score other composers' texts, but no *Wallfahrt nach Kewlar*. Herr Borchardt has justified his choice of only six of the less familiar fragments or lyrics in his Postscript by asserting Heine's essentially conscious and artificial conception of lyric poetry; he looked only for effect, he calculated it from the point of view of his own personal emotions. Hence the proscription, which, with all respect to Herr Borchardt's accuracy of taste, we cannot but consider as too violent and insufficiently justified.

All reviews of anthologies err by dwelling on the omissions, and we have been forced to this by Herr Borchardt's own Postscript, which is not only a very sound consideration of the difference between 'Deutsche Poesie' and 'eine Reihe deutsch dichterischer Autoven', but a well reasoned and comprehensive defence of his critical canons. The positive side of his work he allows to speak for itself—and can well afford to do so. The exquisitely appropriate juxtaposition shown by Palgrave is also found here—and more extensively practised, since Herr Borchardt has entirely rejected historical divisions. Hence Goethe's *Gretchen* comes suddenly, but fitly, into the fourteenth and fifteenth century. Eichendorff's *Greisenlied*, 'Komm,



Trost der Welt, du stille Nacht', follows immediately Grimmelshausen's *Trost der Nacht*—obvious neighbours, but who had put them side by side before? Just enough—but not too much, a common feature of merely historical or 'representational' anthologies—of German ballad-poetry is given by Herr Borchardt. The lyric and hymns of the seventeenth century, now coming into favour again—parallel to our revival of the metaphysical poets—are allowed full space, not because they are seventeenth century, but in their own splendid right. The choice of Goethe, Schiller, Hölderlin, Morike and Rückert avoids the anthologically inevitable and concentrates on the perennial with perfect skill. So, we think, does the choice from Hugo von Hofmannsthal, incidentally the only living poet, except a sonnet by Rudolf Alexander Schröder, here represented—although Stefan George would have been amply given had he departed from his rule of never appearing in anthologies. And as for the unknown, or at least unfamiliar, Herr Borchardt is right to point with some pride to several of his inclusions. Two, poems by Daumer, he acknowledges to Brahms—a contrary example of the often false popularity conferred by a composer on a poet. Two poems by Ramler and Tiedge—never before found, to our knowledge, in anthologies—are here rightly ranked with the perennial treasures. And so we might continue ranging over this collection, without dates or biographical facts to guide one—nothing but the intrinsic worth of the individual poem to fill one's mind. The breath is not caught so often as in an excursion through the English *Golden Treasury*, but there is a general beauty and dignity, a kind of spiritual exaltation on the one side, with a religious gravity on the other which we feel to be the essential note of German poetry as here presented.

A. W. G. RANDALL

*Alfonso the Sage.* By J. B. Trend. (Constable and Co.) 12s. net.

It says a great deal for Mr. Trend's *Alfonso the Sage* that one need not be expert in Spanish history or literature to enjoy it. Mr. Trend carries his learning lightly, and he makes his series of little essays on Spanish poets, playwrights, and musicians, altogether charming. Not only that—he also contrives, in this apparently casual collection of notes and reminiscences, of histories and critical analyses, to give

his reader an extraordinarily vivid and useful sense of the continuity and reality of Spanish art; and in so doing affords one an extremely penetrating *spiritual* guidebook to Spain. Mr. Trend is especially good on Lope de Vega and Gongora (pointing out that Gongora's baroque style, his addiction to classical allusion should be of interest to many contemporary poets) and on various modern poets—how good he is may be suggested by the fact that he makes one want to read them. But his notes on Baroja and Unamuno and Azorin are excellent also, and so are the 'interludes' on Spanish fairies, children's games, and the dance of the Seises in Seville. Among the children's games, Mr. Trend describes one ('one, two, three') which is strikingly like a game played by American children, called 'Still pond, no more moving'. It would be interesting to know whether there exists in England any variant of this. . . . If one has any criticism to offer in regard to Mr. Trend's book, it is that a book so nearly complete should not be entirely so. Perhaps that is asking too much. Nevertheless, the present reader would have welcomed, among the notes on modern poets, something on Espronceda and Becquer (to use modern in the widest sense), if only that the picture of the nineteenth century might be complete.

*The Romantic Theory of Poetry.* An examination in the light of Croce's *Æsthetic*. By A. E. Powell (Mrs. E. R. Dodds). (Arnold.) 12s. 6d.

The critic of this book is rather disarmed by the author's own confession. Her avowed purpose is 'to state and examine, in the light of Croce's searching analysis, the theoretical presuppositions which underlie the great achievements of romantic art and criticism, and to study the relation between the theory and the practice of certain English romantics'. If that programme had been carried out without qualification, the reviewer would have been able, so far as the first part of it is concerned, to 'pitch into' the confusion that results from this as from any practical application of Croce's *æsthetic*. But the author ingenuously proceeds to explain, in her Preface, that in a last chapter she has 'tried to formulate and discuss certain difficulties in Croce's teaching, of which I became aware only after the greater part of the book was composed'. We may be glad, for

Mrs. Dodds' sake, that she has seen through, at least partially, the empty rhetoric of the Neapolitan. This last chapter is, in effect, a complete recantation of the theoretical basis of the book, and it would be idle to criticise in detail a thesis so insecurely founded and so capriciously rejected. Apart from this failure in structure, the book is well written, and the chapters on Blake, Coleridge, Wordsworth, De Quincey, Shelley and Keats are adequate summaries of the contributions which each poet made to the romantic conception of poetry. The essay on Coleridge is exceptionally brilliant.

*The Prelude, or Growth of a Poet's Mind.* By William Wordsworth. Edited from the manuscripts with introduction, textual and critical notes by Ernest de Selincourt, Professor of English in the University of Birmingham. Oxford (Clarendon Press). 25s.

This complete critical text of *The Prelude* is of great interest, and for two rather different reasons. In the first place it presents on opposite pages the original text of 1805-6, written when Wordsworth was 35, and the final text of 1850, as published at the end of the poet's life; and it shows us the successive stages through which the one developed into the other. By following these stages and relating them to the events and background of the poet's life we gain a very intimate insight into the curious growth of Wordsworth's mind—a growth of a kind not altogether implied in the sub-title of the poem. In the second place it shows us, in many stages of trial and emendation, the play of the poet's technique. We see, not only the changing idea, but also the changing expression. In a poet of Wordsworth's capacity both processes are of supreme interest, and an adequate account of them cannot be given within the scope of a short review. We propose, therefore, to return to this volume and devote a more considered essay to some of the questions raised by it. Meanwhile we can recommend the excellent scholarship and careful presswork which have been devoted to its production.

*Dostoevsky portrayed by his wife.* Translated from the Russian and edited by S. S. Koteliansky. (Routledge) 1cs. 6d. net.

Mr. Koteliansky has worked most successfully on fragmentary material and contrives to bear one along as on the sequence of a

story—the story of the romance of Dostoevsky's second wife, from her engagement as his stenographer, through a period of hardship and debt, through a period of comparative ease, to his death, and further to her own death in 1918. The success is indeed Mr. Koteliansky's; for in retrospect Madame Dostoevsky conveys little that is interestingly relevant to the work of her husband: a record of domestic detail as such is none of our business. As to Madame Dostoevsky herself, we regard with respect the practical support which she gave so faithfully; even while we recognise her Victorianism. She was unquestionably a loyal wife, a good mother and a peculiarly capable business manager. And she knew her own limitations.

The book as a whole confirms, if somewhat obliquely, the established idea of the purity of Dostoevsky's struggle with infirmity—with the combination of physical distress, mental morbidity, spiritual temptation.

*The Year's Work in English Studies.* Volume V (1924). Edited for the English Association by F. S. Boas and C. H. Herford. (Oxford University Press.) 7s. 6d. (3s. 6d. to members).

The annual volume of the English Association serves a useful purpose and deserves a wide public. It offers a convenient summary of the publications of the year dealing in any manner with the study of English literature, and covers every aspect and period of this study. In the present volume 488 publications are noticed, of which 274 are books and 214 are articles. This material is divided into thirteen sections, each of which is dealt with by an acknowledged authority. A very complete index adds to the utility of the volume. The work is academic in conception and therefore quite properly academic in outlook.

# FOREIGN REVIEWS

## AMERICAN PERIODICALS

*The Little Review*, Spring-Summer, 1926.—This number gives us typical work of the French 'surrealistes' side by side with the American imitations of it. If the French work strikes us as merely desperately clever, the American is merely desperately silly—a sweeping generalisation from which it is necessary to except Ernest Hemingway ('The indications are that Hemingway is elected to be the big man in American letters'); Matthew Josephson, who is critical of the Surrealistes and contributes a good poem to the number; Hart Crane, whose poems have an individuality which seems rather more than a mannerism; and Gorham B. Munson, who is an intelligent critic. Among the Frenchmen, Jacques Viot is a delightful surprise.

*The Modern Quarterly*, May-July.—Mr. V. F. Calverton relates the Sentimental Comedy of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries to the political and social changes that followed the Restoration. This is but one more application of this critic's theory of the sociological basis of literature, to which we have often referred in these notes; and it is a fairly convincing one. The political changes are sharp and decisive, and the shift in literary tastes is no less obvious. The co-relation of the two movements seems inevitable, and it is only when we think of certain exceptions, like Swift, that we doubt the complete adequacy of the theory. What has the rise of the bourgeoisie to do with *Gulliver's Travels*? Mr. J. M. Robertson deals with Nietzsche's sociology in his usual drastic fashion, but not without sympathy:

'We can but treat Nietzsche finally as a pathological case; a brain powerful even in incipient disease; perhaps owing much of its passing power to its very state of commencing dissolution, in which it knows such strange vibrations; but, because of that state, incoherent, contradictory, overweening, systemless. All this we can forgive, or rather we can see it all so sympathetically from the first that we receive no offence which calls for forgiveness; but what shall we say of the

disciples who seek to build, out of the disintegrating thought of the stricken man of genius, a scientific creed or code for a scientific world? When Nietzsche denounces Socialism and Democracy and the spirit of equality, we know what we are dealing with—the half-truths of the neurotic thinker, the antidote to which may often be found in his own saner work. When he speaks to us of a physiological standard, we can follow the clue, and rectify the theorem, partly with his own help. We agree that progress, to be sociologically sound, must be physiologically sound until it is made sociologically so. We rectify his intuitions or *naïvetés* by an economics which he did not even attempt to understand, and by an *a posteriori* sociology which he did not take the trouble to build up. But the attempt to set him up as a guide in life as well as in thought—what is this but a random movement of indiscipline; and how shall it be justified?'

Mr. Robertson's article is followed by a poem by Langston Hughes, in this manner:

' Sweet girls, sweet girls,  
Listen here to me.  
All you sweet girls,  
Listen here to me:  
Gin an' whisky  
Kin make you lose yo' 'ginity.'

J. B. Eggen writes a useful article on the distinction between the real science of genetics and the popular cult of eugenics.

*The North American Review*, June, July, August.—There are various items of local interest, including four criticisms of the Klu Klux Klan. But of wider interest is a competent account, by Arnold Whitridge, of the ideas of Charles Maurras. The article is expository rather than critical, but exposition is perhaps exactly what is needed for an author so important and yet, in this country and America, so neglected as Maurras. Mr. Whitridge has unexpected praise for the poetry of *La Musique Intérieure*, which is a rare virtue in an English critic. He makes this summary: 'In everything that Maurras writes, prose or poetry, there is always method. A man of his crusading spirit would be incapable of playing the virtuoso. Because his poetry is charged with reflection rather than

emotion the multitude will not accept him as a poet. As a vigorous independent thinker, however, he has won the enthusiastic admiration of a few and the respect of a great many. That there is any demand at all for the stark severity of his teaching proves that the French people have not lost their appetite for ideas.'

*The American Mercury*, May, June, July and August.—There is a great deal of readable matter in these four numbers. It is all very familiar in kind, now that we know Mr. Mencken's style, but it has that raciness or zest which seems to be the distinctive contribution of the American genius to the gaiety of nations. It is as evident in the shams which Mr. Mencken and Mr. Nathan attack, as in the attacks they make. It is a characteristic of American life, and the *American Mercury* has the great virtue of embodying it, and of seeking to embody it instead of fussing too much about European culture.

The following informative paragraph is a convenient anthology of facts prepared for the Anti-Saloon League:

'Suggested Argument Against Prohibition by the Authors' League. —Charles Lamb was such a boozier that it required the combined efforts of Coleridge, Hazlitt and Wordsworth, his fellow tipplers, to stagger up the stairs with him and get him into bed. Anatole France, according to his secretary, Brousson, consumed a quart of cognac every time he composed a critique, and stated that the only review he ever wrote for the *Temps* which got him the special commendation of his editor was a feuilleton he wrote when he was so stewed that he hadn't the slightest notion he had ever written it and didn't recognise it when he saw it in print. Jules Lemaître drank so much that his innamorata, Mme. de Loynes, always brushed his lips with rose water before allowing him to bestow upon her a loving smack. Ibsen was one of the greatest *Biersäufer* to whom the *Oberkellner* of the Café Luitpold ever vouchsafed a *Grüss Gott*, and Wagner was the delight of the *Wirt* at Bayreuth. Shakespeare, in his earlier years and when he was making the reputation that will never die from man's memory, drank regularly every night he had the money from ten o'clock until two the next morning. Lessing put the breweries of Hamburg on their feet and caused them to pay increased dividends to their stockholders. Stephen Crane knew

intimately all the most conspicuous bartenders of his day, and Thomas Hardy, like Conrad before him, keeps a carafe of port handy on the sideboard. When Jack London gave up rum, his writing went to pot.

Swift loved his liquor, as did Chaucer. Rostand's favourite beverage was the white wine of Bordeaux, Château de Suiduiraud in particular, and Marcel Proust's is Château Climens. Congreve drank a quart of Burgundy every night at dinner, and washed it down with several ponies of brandy. Ambrose Bierce's taste was for straight whiskey, provided only the glasses were big enough, and Nathaniel Hawthorne's penchant was for ale. Sterne was off the stuff only in his unproductive years; the moment he took to ethyl alcohol he produced *Tristram Shandy* and the *Sentimental Journey*. William Schwenk Gilbert lived up to the traditions of his middle name, and Fielding wrote *Joseph Andrews* in a mildly pickled state. Sir Charles Napier wrote his one and only book, *War in Syria*, after his physician had prescribed a moderate daily use of alcohol after a long and deleterious period of abstinence. Under the assumed name of Dr. Schmidt, Schiller enjoyed the malt of Oggersheim, and later of Bauerbach, to such a degree that for years afterward he was fretful if any other brew was passed over to him. Byron tried all the tipples of Portugal, Spain, Turkey and Greece, and apparently found them to his liking, and Swinburne's cast-iron stomach is known to history. Dickens was a magnificent stower-away of ale; old Sam Johnson's booze chair is familiar to all American Prohibitionists who have gone to London on Cook's tours; and Oscar Wilde could down six glasses of green Chartreuse or eight of bad brandy without turning a hair.

We come to the present American scene. Who are the outstanding writers in the country to-day? Dreiser, Cabell, Lewis, Anderson, Hergesheimer, Sandburg, O'Neill—and not one of them, from personal observation, would exactly faint in the presence of a bottle.'

*The Forum*, April and May.—'A non-partisan magazine of free discussion. It aims to interpret the new America that is attaining consciousness in this decade. *The Forum* gives both sides. Whatever is attacked by contributors this month may be praised in later issues.' This superscription is neatly printed in capitals and framed



up on the front page. It is adequate enough. In its way the *Forum* is as readable as the *American Mercury*, only it appeals to a different audience. It gives both sides. A symposium in the March number on education by 'the nation's maturer minds' proved a little confusing to the Editor, we are told. That is the worst of giving both sides. More hopefully we turn to the advertisement pages—often the most interesting section of an American magazine. They, at any rate, only give one side. For example: *McNaught's Monthly* is a sane American Review.

'While the stage is crowded with literary dervishes, doing wordy acrobatics to attract attention, it may interest you to know that there is this kind of a magazine to be had. Sane but not dull. American but not provincial. Intelligent but not pedantic. The country is talking about

### "INTELLIGENTSIANA"

a regular monthly feature of *McNaught's*. It goodnaturedly shows up the shams and the follies of the ultra-intellectual literati, who have been getting away with much unchallenged nonsense in recent years.'

That sounds interesting. But of more practical application is the photograph of a flabby-faced prize-fighter, accompanied by an unsigned article which is too long to quote in full, but from which we extract the following pithy sentences:

'I used to pride myself on guessing people's ages. That was before I met Hobart Bradstreet, whose age I missed by a quarter-century. But before I tell you how old he really is, let me say this:

My meeting up with Bradstreet I count the luckiest day of my life. For while we often hear how our minds and bodies are about 50 per cent efficient—and at times feel it to be the truth—he knows *why*. Furthermore, he knows how to overcome it—in five minutes—and he showed me *how*.

This man offers no such bromides as setting-up exercises, deep-breathing, or any of those things you know at the outset you'll never do. He uses a principle that is the foundation of all chiropractic, naprapathy, mechano-therapy, and even osteopathy. Only he does not touch a hand to you; it isn't necessary.

The reader will grant Bradstreet's method of staying young worth knowing and using, when told that its originator (whose photograph reproduced here was taken a month ago) is sixty-five years old!

And here is the secret: *he keeps his spine a half-inch longer than it ordinarily would measure.*

Mr. Bradstreet had evolved from his 25-year experience with spinal mechanics a simple, boiled-down formula of just five movements. Neither takes more than one minute, so it means but five minutes a day. But those movements! I never experienced such compound exhilaration before. I was a good subject for the test, for I went into it with a dull headache. At the end of the second movement I thought I could actually feel my blood circulating. The third movement in this remarkable Spine-Motion series brought an amazing feeling of exhilaration. One motion seemed to open and shut my backbone like a jack-knife.

I asked about constipation. He gave me another motion—a peculiar, writhing and twisting movement—and fifteen minutes later came a complete evacuation!

I wish you could see Bradstreet himself. He is arrogantly healthy; he doesn't seem to have any nerves. Yet he puffs incessantly at a black cigar that would floor some men, drinks two cups of coffee at every meal, and I don't believe he averages seven hours' sleep. It shows what a sound nerve-mechanism will do. He says a man's power can and should be unabated up to the age of 60, in every sense, and I have had some astonishing testimony on that score.'

It is very cheap too (only three dollars) and 'results come amazingly quick'. No wonder a new America is to attain consciousness in this decade!

*The Dial*, May, June, July and August.—The most interesting items in these four numbers of *The Dial* are: two contributions to the history of the Irish Renaissance by John Eglinton, 'Yeats and his Story' (May) and 'George Moore and his Story' (August); a description of a Spanish bullfight by Waldo Frank (May); two essays by George Saintsbury, 'Xenophon' (June) and 'Abelard and Heloise' (July), a translation of Paul Valéry's 'Method of Leonardo da Vinci' (June and July); a short story by Daniel Corkery

(August); a long review of 'The Meaning of Meaning' by Bertrand Russell, which seems to announce a nearer approach to Behaviorism on the part of that versatile philosopher (August); and a Paris letter from Paul Morand in the June number, which contains, among other interesting comments, a criticism of Gide's latest novel (*Les Faux Monnayeurs*). There are, as always, in each number several reproductions of interesting modern pictures.

*Scribner's Magazine*, May, June, July and August.—'The Stripped Atom', by Professor Robert A. Millikan, in the May number, is an important account of original research in atomic physics. 'The Mating Season of Co-Education', by Frank R. Arnold, throws more light on the awakening consciousness of America. This is a quotation from an editorial in the *Yale College Weekly*:

'There is a pernicious habit among certain love-stricken youths of our college which can most accurately be described as "pawing". We have all seen it; the sane denounce it; too many girls permit it. This method of courtship, while it is no doubt ridiculous, is at the same time pathetic. We have one type of infatuated young man who thinks himself in love and wishes to inform the entire world of it. He meets the feminine object of his affection as she comes through the hallway between classes or elsewhere on the campus, greets her with outstretched arms and lets his hands flutter lightly over her dimpled cheeks, fondles her silken hair, and gazes searchingly into her dark, luminous eyes.

Another kind of girl-enamored swain proceeds in a somewhat different fashion. He sights his maiden on a walk on the campus, calls loudly for her to halt, strides up with a "Lo, kid," twines one of his brawny arms firmly about her neck, pinches her cheek, grabs her hand, and after a slight, noisy struggle appropriates her books or vanity case. Finally the class bell rings and the two separate. The girl goes to her next class thinking herself popular. The fellow, with the spirit of "conquest" still high, seeks another victim.

Sex attraction is inborn. It is something we cannot well destroy. However, it can, to a desirable extent, be controlled. This open, unleashed, mauling mode of lifting the safety valve of calf-love is entirely out of date. It is primitive, barbaric, and indecent.'

An article in the August number deals with a related subject—*'The Morals of College Journalism'*.

*Harper's Magazine*, May and July.—*'What France Thinks of her War-time Allies'*, by André Tardieu, is mainly what Monsieur Tardieu thinks of some of our politicians, and is merely what most of us think of them. In *'Notes of an Emigré'*, in the July number, Mr. Albert J. Nock comments on the Continental family system, and contrasts with it the incomparable freedom enjoyed by the American married woman. In another article on *'The Wife, the Home, and the Job'*, Mrs. Mavity shows us how this freedom is gained:

*'When my second baby came I took no leave of absence. During that winter, the three men who had desks in the same room with me had all been out for several weeks with influenza, and on these occasions I had helped to carry their work. Nevertheless, I had reason to fear that if I took time out the interpretation would be drawn that a married woman should not hold my position. I went regularly to the office until one night (a bit of bravado, this!) I drove my own car to the hospital. I had left two weeks' work prepared in advance. But when the baby was three days old I set up a typewriter on my hospital tray, and was keeping in touch with the office through my husband as daily intermediary. This is still another way of attaining national consciousness in a decade!*

Both numbers contain important articles by Dr. John B. Watson on *'What is Behaviorism'* and *'Memory and Association'*; but these are to a large extent covered by his recently published book, *Behaviorism*.

Also received: *The Saturday Review of Literature*, *The Nation*, *The Literary Review of the New York Evening Post*.

H.R.

## FRENCH PERIODICALS.

*Mercur de France.* May to July. The *Mercur de France* is still the most comprehensive and encyclopædic of French reviews. In two hundred years' time, it will be a valuable possession. Not that it is not so now. But the student will look to it in vain for any guidance to the English letters of our day. What has happened to M. Henry-D. Davray? And why is there never a rubric, 'Lettres anglaises' now? There is one, 'Lettres anglo-américaines'. In the number for 1st May, M. Emile Bernard discusses *L'Erreur de Cézanne*. I do not know what the error is, unless it be that Cézanne did not paint like M. Emile Bernard; but I find M. Bernard saying:

'To review the world in the light of the mind is to discover its sense (is it?—or is it merely to add an intellectual to a sensational illusion?); remaining in reality is merely stopping at details (this, if it means anything, is surely not true). Any art that is made up of sensations alone is inferior (no art can be made up of sensations alone). Classical beauty imposes a spiritualising and generalising realism, that is to say, the knowledge of the forms of life and that of their moral sense (tut tut)'.

M. Bernard is using worn out phrases and ideas that have been discovered to be empty. To the number for 15th May, M. Jean Cassou contributes a *Portrait d'Unamuno*, followed by *Comment on fait un Roman*, by Miguel de Unamuno.: 'There is a Saint Augustine in him', says M. Cassou, 'and a Jean-Jacques; there is something of all those who, steeped in the contemplation of their own miracle, cannot endure the fact that they are not eternal'. In the same number, *Poèmes de Melgare*, by Pierre Nothomb, *Marcel Proust et la jeune Littérature*, by Raphael Cor, and *Fersen d'après son Journal*, by Jacques de Coussange. M. Cor is interesting; I like his description of Gide:

'...ce Stendhal sans franchise, explorateur précautionneux des terres réprouvées, circonspect, réticent, aussi peu 'milanais' que possible, mais plutôt citoyen d'une étrange Genève où traîneraient des relents de Sodome. Avec ses airs de n'y pas toucher, sa façon de rôder autout des désirs irréguliers et cette main bénisseuse qui se rétracte en griffe, on dirait Méphisto jouant au prédicant'.

1st June: *Francis Vielé-Griffin*, by Antoine Orliac. 15th June:

*L'Œuvre de Charles Guérin*, by Henry Dérioux, *Notes sur l'Angleterre*, by Paul Verlaine, translated from *The Fortnightly Review* of July, 1894. 1st July: *Regard sur Sainte-Beuve*, by Gabriel Brunet, a study of Sainte-Beuve's secret attitude towards his contemporaries, his resentments. Sainte-Beuve was continually hurt by the difference between a man and his work, and his solution was: charlatanry, which was too simple. *L'Épopée au Faubourg*, by Alfred Machard. This is a study, in the form of a novel, of the development of the sexual instinct among the children of the working classes in Paris. Either French children are different from English children, or M. Machard knows very little about his subject. His boys of thirteen are ignorant of sex! Very few English boys in the London County Council schools have much to learn at that age. I knew two boys of twelve and thirteen who had shared a mistress for months, a girl of their own age; and, from the age of eight onwards, I never met a boy who was not *au fait*. I doubt whether French boys are any different. 15th July: *De Quelques 'Poèmes en Prose' inédits d'Oscar Wilde*, by Henry-D. Davray.

*La Nouvelle Revue Française*. May.—*Au hasard et au crayon*, by Paul Valéry: Notes, of which this is: 'Rien de plus rare que de ne donner aucune importance aux choses qui n'ont aucune importance'. Too true! June: *Littérature*, by Paul Valéry: notes, of which this is: 'Toute œuvre est l'œuvre de bien d'autres choses qu'un auteur'. Too true, too true! *Divertissement philologique*, by Valéry Larbaud. M. Larbaud has discovered the Portuguese language, and he is very interesting and entertaining about it. *Le Roman Catholique*, by Albert Thibaudet. July. A story, *Un homme de lettres*, by François Mauriac, a penetrating study of literary egotism. M. Ramon Fernandez on André Gide.

*Le Navire d'Argent*, May. This is the last number for the moment. Mlle Monnier, the editor, is at the end of her resources. She has even been compelled to sell her private library to pay her debts. It is a pity; but these sacrifices are fairly common in Paris. Jean Royère, I was once told, kept *La Phalange* going on his salary as a civil servant, while his wife and he went without 'necessities'. He has the comfort that *La Phalange* is a fine monument. Let Mlle Monnier take heart; her *Navire d'argent* will be found to bear the hall mark. This number is mainly devoted to poetry;

there is also the second instalment of a bibliography of German literature translated into French.

*Les feuilles libres*, May-June.—Contributions by Pierre Drieu La Rochelle, Philippe Soupault, Daisy Ashford, René Crevel, G. Ribemont-Dessaignes and Giorgio de Chirico.

*Commerce*. VII.—Contributions by Léon-Paul Fargue, Valéry Larbaud, Jules Supervielle, Antonin Artaud, Roger Vitrac, Edith Sitwell, Vincenzo Cardarelli, Roger Fry and Pushkin.

*Les Marges*. May-June.

*Les Cahiers du Sud*. May-June.

F. S. F.

## GERMAN PERIODICALS

*Die Neue Rundschau* (Berlin, S. Fischer).—In the May number Thomas Mann begins—and in the two following numbers continues—his account of his recent visit to Paris, where he was fêted by Cabinet Ministers and poets, lady intellectuals and patrons of the arts, diplomats and academicians. Most of the narrative is of local, personal or otherwise very transitory interest, but his summary of M. Henri Lichtenberger's address and his own address is worth reading by anyone who gives thought to the problem of the future of European culture. M. Lichtenberger, with a deprecating gesture, seems to have scouted the theory of the dominance of Latin civilisation, and in conclusion to have hinted pessimism by quoting Nietzsche's aphorism, 'Words and sounds are rainbows and bridges of dreams across that which is for ever divided.' The German novelist then began to construct a rather ponderous and yet unsubstantial rainbow—if the phrase may be allowed. Europe stood or fell as a unit; after this note was struck came an exposition of the 'Gottesunmittelbarkeit des Ichs und des Volks', of 'Gesellschaftlichkeit'—'another word for democracy'. And then followed a really lucid explanation of the German 'Wesen', its 'tendency to the abyss, to formlessness and chaos,' and of the fundamental opposition between the Western-American outlook on life and the German 'geschichtsphilosophische Denken'. M. André Gide does not seem to have been present, but had he been he might well have stood up to second these remarks. One felt that the rainbow was

far too shadowy for anyone to walk upon, and after all what does it matter? Intellectual differences may be the cement of international friendship, provided there is mutual respect and a common consciousness of a fundamental common tradition. It is not a cosmopolitan Europe that is going to stand together, for it is precisely the advocates of this ideal who go further afield and introduce far more dangerous elements of disunion. Herr Arthur Holitscher, for example, in the same number, who has an excellently-written account of Ghandi, to whom he put a number of sound questions, implying the complete inadmissibility of Eastern philosophy for Europe—and then failed to draw the sound conclusions from Ghandi's replies. A worthy example of the fashionable—though growing much less fashionable—pro-Eastern movement in Germany, to which M. Massis has been calling attention in these pages. A good and authoritative article on Sigmund Freud, by Fritz Wittels, also appears in this number. The disciple writes of the master, just turned seventy, as at the beginning rather than the end of his work and influence, which is depressing to read, since Herr Wittels emphasises the utter pessimism of Freud's belief, and his constant conviction that man will not and cannot grow better.

In the June number of this review the most important article is an essay on Russia in *Weltpolitick*, by Emil Lederer. The writer is a frank admirer of Moscow, and sees in the spread of its influence in Asia a parallel with the early Roman Empire. There are less friendly critics who have noted the parallel, but they have not been so cheerful about it.

The July number is a Shaw birthday number. Mr. Frank Harris writes the expected eulogy and Mr. Shaw the equally expected sketch showing how it should be done, with one or two candid personal anecdotes we do not seem to have seen reproduced in the English Press, as, for example, the reply of the actress to the stage-director, who suggested that Mr. Shaw should be given some meat to put some blood in him.

In the August number Ernst Robert Curtius writes with his customary knowledge and ease of *surréalisme*.

*Die Literatur* (Berlin, Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt).—No numbers have been sent for this quarter, but we are willing, nevertheless, to announce that the issue for June was devoted to current American literature, with essays by Professor W. Lyon Phelps, Miss Lulu



Vollmer—a really informative article on modern American drama—Miss Blanche Williams and Mr. Mark Van Doren. Many of the writers discussed are rarely, if ever, in America, but the secret was not betrayed to the German reader.

*Europäische Revue* (Leipzig, Neue Geist Verlag).—This review, now in its second year, is a very welcome addition to the number—a small one—of German intellectual reviews, which are solid without being academic, and international without being cranky. The first article in the July number, by Herr Von Wesendouk, on the Nature of Western Culture (*Vom Wesen des Abendländischen*) should certainly be read by anyone who has pondered M. Henri Massis's essay on the 'Defence of the West'. The following passage seems worth quoting:

'Neither technical progress in the American sense, nor Eastern religions, will bring Europe salvation. This will come from the line leading from the Ionian philosophers through Socrates and Plato to Aristotle, and from Salon, Lycurgus, Pythagoras, Pericles and Alexander to Augustus and the Roman Empire. The nature of Europe is such that its individual members do not lose their identity under the intellectual domination of antiquity, but develop it, each in its special manner. Thus Britain becomes Rome of to-day, Germany tends to resemble Greece; Attic salt and logical clarity belong to France, a sense of form to Italy. . . . A general European culture, detached from the separate nations forming part of it, cannot exist to-day. That became impossible after the Middle Ages ended. . . . Influence in a European sense can only be attained by the nation that, working unconsciously on the foundation of antiquity, creates anew from its own individuality.'

There are several other notable articles, political and philosophical, in this number, which may be commended as a whole to the readers of this review.

*Die Literarische Welt* (Berlin, S. Rowohlt).—This weekly review continues its comprehensive account of current literary doings, forthcoming works of prominent writers, personal anecdotes and notices of new books. The May 14th number was devoted to the P.E.N. Club, from whose German section a number of the younger German writers, including Herr Haas, the editor of this

periodical, have more or less violently dissented. In the July 2nd number was a sensible article by Stefan Zureig on Internationalism or Cosmopolitanism.

A.W.G.R.

### SWISS PERIODICALS.

*Revue de Genève.* May. The first instalment, by M. Jean-Louis Vaudoyer, of *Un Amour d'Aubanel*, the Provençal poet. M. Edmond Jaloux contributes an interesting *Lettre de Paris*, mostly about the younger French novelists who have revealed themselves during the last two years. His selection of young men with the most talent is as follows: Gilbert Robin (*Femme et la Lune*); Jean Cassou (*Eloge de la Folie, La Sonate de Toselli, Les Harmonies viennoises*); André Beucler (*La Ville anonyme, Un suicide, Entrée du désordre*); Maurice Betz (*l'Incertain*); Emmanuel Bove (*Mes Amis, Crime d'une Nuit*); Joseph Delteil (*Jeanne d'Arc, Les Poilus*); Philippe Soupault (*Le Bon Apôtre, A la dérive, En joue*); Georges Bernanos (*Sous le Soleil de Satan*); Jean Barreyre (*Vaisseau aveugle*); Guillaume Gaulème (*Mémorial secret*); Marcel Arland (*Etienne, Monique*); and others. I haven't these books; but, if some millionaire will give them to me (with the 'and others'), I will undertake to read them, and even to write an article about them.

June. The end of *Un Amour d'Aubanel*. An amusing article, *l'Echelle de John Bull*, by a young Spaniard, now dead, Julio Arceval, who seems to have had a fine gift of humour and observation. His *Notes sur l'Angleterre* are about to be published in book form. They might be worth translation. After describing the English 'stare' (ce regard implique que la 'personne' regardée est comme si elle n'était pas), Arceval continues:

'Les femmes utilisent, pour cette importante fonction sociale, un organe qui est, chez elles, bien plus actif et plus délicat, plus subtil, et plus expressif,—le nez. La nature n'offre rien qui égale l'impressionnabilité d'un nez d'Anglaise. Aux différences de niveau social il réagit avec une rapidité qui tient du prodige. Ses réactions se graduent en nuances délicates, depuis la classe la plus infime jusqu'à la plus huppée. Chez les femmes de ménage et chez les dames d'un rang social relativement bas, le haussement de mépris en présence de créatures d'un rang inférieur est visible à l'œil nu,

et assez souvent s'accompagne d'un bruit pareil à une eau qui gargouille dans un canal à demi-bouché. Chez les dames de haut rang, c'est un tremblement des narines, à peine perceptible, et parfaitement silencieux. Chose assez curieuse, la sensibilité d'un nez d'Anglaise est en raison inverse du niveau social qu'il est appelé à repérer. Le nez d'une infirmière d'hôpital ne se donne pas la peine de manifester la présence d'une femme de ménage; mais il décèle immédiatement une femme de chambre ou une bonne d'enfant. Des narines ducales ne daignent vibrer en présence de qui que ce soit au-dessous du rang baronniel. Car tel est le raffinement de la société anglaise que le mépris même devient parfois un compliment, puisqu'il implique reconnaissance'.

F. S. F.

*Neue Schweizer Rundschau* (Zurich, Orell Füssli).—In the May number an article on Dostoevsky and the West, by the editor, Dr. Max Rychner, who gives a well-balanced appreciation of the Dostoevsky movement in modern European literature and thought, showing neither uncritical enthusiasm nor undue panic. European culture, he says in effect, has before now swallowed and digested as big mouthfuls as the Russian novelist, and probably was better afterwards. The chief danger he sees in the Dostoevsky-worship is the way it leads to complete denial and an impious scorn of all Europe's own gods.

The June number has a useful account, by Mario Puccini, of the most important Italian reviews of to-day, and an essay, by C. D. Marcus, on Norwegian Prose since Hamsun—two titles showing how eclectic is this Swiss periodical in its new form. In the July number Marcus Joffe gives an interesting account of modern Hebrew literature. Many of the younger Jewish writers seem to be of the decadent school, 'Form Zertrümmerer' and portrayers of 'Zerstörte Existenzen'.

In the August number a further Norwegian article, on Hamsun's poetry, by Hermann Hiltbrunner, with several examples in German translation.

A.W.G.R.

## RUSSIAN PERIODICALS

*Volja Rossii* (Prague).—Politics compose the bulk of this ably edited periodical, but there are enough good literary features to justify '——and Culture' in the sub-title. The leading feature in Numbers IV and V is 'A Knife for Forty Sous', a series of reflections on the history of the French Revolution by Edouard Herriot, from his book *Dans la Forêt Normande*.

A Russian's reactions to such a writer as Jean Giraudoux are bound to be interesting; they do not hinder the critic in question, P. Muratov, from paying the author of *Siegfried et le Limousine* and *Suzanne et le Pacifique* due tribute. He sees in the created characters not living men and women, in the sense that Balzac's and Dostoevsky's and Chekhov's are living men and women, but rather decidedly clever mechanisms, perfect in their way and fit for the marionette theatre. They do not, he says, even possess 'the intensive half-life peculiar to the personages who people Proust's pages'. Russians, he observes, would be inclined to regard Giraudoux's productions as over-cerebral, and he thinks that a certain measure of this quality would not be bad for Russian literature, whose tendency has been in the opposite direction. Nevertheless, Giraudoux's talent lies precisely in his extraordinary dissociation from life, in his complete surrender to art; this, while admirable, is, in the critic's opinion, symptomatic of the times, and not without its danger.

In the same issue Edouard Benesh continues his studies in 'The Problem of Slavonic Politics' from the contemporary as well as the historic point of view. 'The Peasant and the Fate of Russia', by E. Stalinsky, is a very illuminating article on the power the moujik wields over the destinies of the greatest Slav country. He clearly shows that even the Bolsheviks, with all their show of force, have not been able to conquer him. On the contrary, in order to placate the peasantry, they have been compelled to abdicate all along the line and to sacrifice their most cherished doctrines. Lenin himself was one of the first to see the necessity of surrendering to the demands of the majority, who were certainly not the proletariat. Curiously enough, it was the Bolsheviks who were responsible for creating their strongest opposition; this happened when, at the beginning of the Revolution, they made a gift to the peasant of the land, thus establishing a new property-owning class, a new 'bourgeoisie'. And any political party desiring power in Russia

must reckon with this force, which has always been strong but never so consciously strong as now.

Number V of *Volja Rossii* contains a long poem by Marina Tzvetayeva and a chapter from a new novel by Remizov. A touching essay on the poet, Esenin, who died lately an untimely death, appears from the pen of Prince D. S. Mirsky, who never fails to be interesting. Esenin belonged to that class of poets who are loved for something inherent in their work yet dissociable from poetry as such. In Esenin it was a quality which the Russians call *toska*, and the most approximate English translation we can give of the word is 'longing'. This is not to say that Esenin was not a poet; he was at his best, as Prince Mirsky amply proves by quotation, a fine poet and within the native tradition; but his verses are always saturated with a human, very tender quality and an unutterable longing, 'for which every Russian forgives everything'. His best poems were written about animals. He suffered a severe disillusion in Bolshevism, which he had at first regarded as a realisation of a kind of esthetical-mystical Utopia; he ended by losing faith in himself. After that there was nothing but the noose.

Political articles of international interest in the same issue are: 'Russia and Europe', by R. Breitscheid; 'The Burning Question of Emigration', by V. Lebedev; 'In Defence of Russian Labour Abroad', a Memorandum by the Russian Party of Socialist-Revolutionaries addressed to the International Congress Concerning Migration; and 'An Historic Conflict', by E. Stalinsky, who discusses the significance of the recent General Strike in England and the changes which are bound to take place in the relations between Capital and Labour.

*Blagonamerenny* (Brussels).—The second issue of this periodical, covering March and April, contains a number of distinguished creative features, including a hitherto unpublished fragment from a poem by Zhukovsky, poems by Tzvetayeva and Khodasevich, a long prose poem by Remizov written in his most characteristic vein, and two short stories by D. Sobolev and S. Efron, both not without quality.

Critical prose is represented by Prince Mirsky, whose dialogue on 'Conservatism' is a discussion of old and new values in Russian literature; and by the poetess, Marina Tzvetayeva, who writes

impressionistically and at length concerning a poet's views with regard to contemporary criticism. She begins by pointing out that critics of poetry are for the most part authors of bad verses, and commends to them the example of Saint-Beuve, who judged his own verses and found them wanting. Saint-Beuve was sufficiently critical to reject his own verses, and a judge who can so severely judge himself has it in him to be a critic. She develops this thesis and asks: Who does not write verses to-day? Who does not criticise? No poet would venture to tell a banker or a butcher how to run his business; yet who does not tell a poet that his verses are good or bad? The poetical and the critical crafts are like other crafts and require exact knowledge. She demands of the critic knowledge and love, which are the essence of all good work. And it is knowledge and love which impel a poet to write. 'For whom do I write?' she asks, and she answers: 'Not for the millions, not for any one, not for myself. . . . Why do I write? I write because I cannot help writing. On the question of one's aim one can only reply by referring to the cause. . . . There is no other way.' But the conditions of which she complains are by no means specifically Russian, if that is any consolation to Madame Tzvetseva.

J.C.

### DANISH PERIODICALS.

*Tilskueren*, May.—The chief feature of this number is a continuation of the political article on the *Easter Crisis of 1920*. There is also an interesting little play, '*Sandhedens Havn (Truth's Revenge)*', described as a 'marionette comedy', by Karin Blixen-Finecke, with, as its protagonist, a semi-philosophic innkeeper, who declares that death is 'the only thing we have left of the greatness of the old days, and without it no one could endure the boredom of life'. The characters are all artificial figures in the good sense.

June.—Kai Friis-Møller contributes to this number an excellent rendering of the *Pervigilium Veneris* under the title *Nattevgten for Venus*. There is a pleasant article by Johannes Tholle, a garden architect, in which he discusses poets' gardens, notably Goethe's, and suggests that these are the best form of national memorial to poets. There are none such in Denmark. The number also contains some interesting unpublished letters from Holger Drachmann

to P. E. Lange, the composer, about his play *Der var engang*; and a long review of Lord Grey's *Memoirs* by Karl Rasmussen.

July.—Paul V. Rubow in *Holbergiana*, a review of a number of recent books on Holberg, utters a timely warning against over-commentated editions and the publishing of every scrap an author ever wrote, valueless or not. The writer attempts to place Holberg in European literature. As a writer of comedies, compared to Molière, his master, Holberg is a 'fisherman for sport alongside a deep-sea trawler'. His historical works are a species of novel, true novels, if you like, but his real aim was to furnish attractive reading. The whole seems rather tepid praise for the real founder of Danish modern literature, of whom Sir Edmund Gosse says: that he 'found Denmark unprovided with books and he wrote a library for her', and a very fine library.

An article by Sigurd Næsgaard on *Mysticism and Thought* is a plea for the application of real 'free thought', which has made possible the marvellous progress of science, to the spiritual world which is still at the mercy of mysticism and rationalism. In *A Young Man Reads Horace* Frederick Schyberg rather charmingly rediscovers Horace, who is generally damned beforehand for the young by insistence on his doctrine of the golden mean. The article concludes: 'A young man reads Horace because he cannot express what he feels. And if he could, it would not be nearly so rich, so alive, so varied—so modern—as these poems of 2,000 years ago.'

Jørgen Bukdahl, in the first part of a review of *Norwegian Literature in 1925*, deals first with the language question. Norway, he says, has no national language. Speech is changing every day; Danish words, Danish rhythms and Danish syntax are dying out. He grants that one day a living Norwegian language will emerge from the struggle; but he does not think that Dano-Norwegian will make a predominating contribution to the new language. Of the books he reviews he says that no two are uniform in language. He recommends chiefly novels by women writers: *Olav Audunson*, by Sigrid Undset (whose books are awaited with the expectation that Ibsen's used to excite); Ingeborg Møller's *Job Sveinungsson*; Ingeborg Refling-Hagen's *Glaam*; and Hulda Garborg's *Graagubben* (*Grey Old Man*).

## SPANISH PERIODICALS

*Revista de Occidente.* This is the most alertly intelligent of all the foreign reviews that reach me: intelligent in the sense that its eyes are open on the world, the whole world; they are not directed solely to the doings of a particular clique or coterie or even nation.

January.—*Prometeo o la biología y el progreso del hombre*, by H. S. Jennings. *Reforma de la Inteligencia*, by the editor, José Ortega y Gasset, who makes a plea for the return of 'intelligence' to its own proper task. 'It is necessary for the intellectual minorities to extirpate from their work all political and humanitarian "pathos", and to renounce all desire to be taken seriously—seriousness is the great "pathetic"—by the masses. In other words, intelligence must cease to be a public question, and become once more the private exercise of persons who have a special and spontaneous call. The relatively greater solidity of English social life is due in part to the fact that the English intellectual—man of letters, philologist, philosopher—does not expect the nation to collaborate with him in his efforts, but looks upon himself as an amateur united to other amateurs, with whom he exchanges, in a purely sportive activity, his ideas and discoveries. This gives to English thought—through its great native limitations—so limpid and true a serenity that it at least eliminates the great faults committed—*exempli gratia*—by literature in France and by philosophy in Germany. For, in France, literature and, in Germany, philosophy have lost their character of affection and love, and have been transformed into national mentefactories, into public questions.' Señor Ortega y Gasset would have the intellectual retire into his study, into pure meditation, wherein he would mature his ideas, bring his discoveries to point, letting pass the soldier, the priest, the captain of industry and the footballer; and then, 'what pleasure there would be . . . in firing over their heads a magnificent, exact and well-ripened idea, full utterly with light!'

February.—*De la vida del Gid*, by R. Menéndez Pidal. *Timoteo o el teatro del porvenir*, by Bonamy Dobrée. *El éter, la relatividad y los resultados experimentales de Miller*, by Blas Cabrera.

March.—*Pasión y muerte*, by Corpus Barga. *Lo picaresco y Cervantes*, by Américo Castro. *La Geo-política y el porvenir del Pacífico*, by J. G. de la Serna Favre



April.—*Aurora de Verdad*, by Pedro Salinas. *La vida de nuestros antepasados cuaternarios en Europa*, by Hugo Obermaier. *El dueño del átomo*, by Ramón Gómez de la Serna. *Por una nueva literatura rusa*, by Wladimir Astrow.

May.—*España y Europa*, by Count Hermann Keyserling. *La Bestia*, by Joseph Conrad.

June.—*Régula, enemiga de la Cruz*, by Albrecht Schaeffer, a German writer. *Ley y materia*, by Max Born. *Girola*, by Antonio Marichalar. *En extremo Oriente*, by Léon Werth.

There is too much in these six numbers to review in a short note; but it will be quite clear that the *Revista de Occidente* is both catholic in its choice of subjects and international in its choice of writers. In each number, there are critical and other notes, as well as poems and articles not mentioned above.

F. S. F.

## ITALIAN PERIODICALS

*Il Convengo*, April.—*Pigrizia (Favoletta immorale)*, by G. B. Angioletti. *Péguy e i Tharaud*, by G. Titta Rosa.

May—June.—This double number is devoted almost entirely to the Danish novelist and poet, Jens Peter Jacobson, who was born on 7th April, 1847, and died on 30th, April, 1885. There is a note by Giuseppe Gabetti on *L'Arte di Jacobsen*, followed by long extracts from the two novels, *Maria Grubbe* and *Niels Lyne*. It is said that the influence exercised by Jacobsen not only on Scandinavian, but also on German poetry has been immense. The last verses he wrote were :

Lys over Landet  
Det er det, vi vil.

(Light over the earth, that is our desire). He has had two translators into English: A. Robertson (London, 1902) and H. Astrup Larsen (New York, 1917).

July.—G. Titta Rosa discusses Cocteau and Maritain in *Il poeta e il Neo Tomista (éccaurant, non è vero, caro signore?)*. Carlo Carrà writes on *L'Esposizione di Venezia*.

F. S. F.